Three Months in a Workshop

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THREE MONTHS IN A WORKSHOP

THREE MONTHS IN A WORKSHOP

A PRACTICAL STUDY

BY

PAUL GÖHRE

General Secretary of the Evangelical Social Congress

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY A. B. CARR

WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY PROFESSOR RICHARD T. ELY

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Dedicated

TO HIS FELLOW-WORKMEN IN THE FACTORY

BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFATORY NOTE

WHEN the present work appeared in Germany, it produced a profound sensation and led to important social action in several directions. The chief result was perhaps the formation of a Society, the Evangelical Social Congress, for the study of social questions by adherents of the Evangelical Church ; and of this Society the author was made Secretary.

The Society holds annual gatherings which are notable, and publishes reports of these and also leaflets, its aim being two-fold, *viz.* to throw a light on the social problems of our day, and to stimulate the conscience of Christian people to a better performance of duty.

The story is a very simple one. The author, a theological student, perplexed by conflicting theories and reports touching the lot of the wage-earners, their habits of thought, their struggles and their aspirations, determines to become a wage-earner himself, and, donning the garb of a workman, finds employment in a large manufacturing establishment in industrial Saxony. He mingles for three months with his fellows, who never suppose him to be anything else than a wage-earner; he shares their life, participates in their amusements, attends their political meetings, and then tells what he has seen and heard with that simpli-

city which is in itself literary art of a high order. The narrative is plain, straightforward, truthful.

The book was greeted by the wealth and culture of Germany like a revelation. As one of the most Conservative newspapers of Germany put it, it was as if some one had returned from the heart of Africa and described the ways of a strange and hitherto unknown nation, so great had been the actual separation of classes.

The book was never more timely than to-day, and it is as instructive in England and the United States as in Germany. Modern industrial conditions are similar in all lands where our civilisation is found, and in the main what holds true for one country is equally true for all others.

RICHARD T. ELY.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,
MADISON, WISCONSIN, U.S.A.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE following account is prepared from copious memoranda made during my experience as a factory hand. A small part of it has been borrowed from articles contributed by me last autumn to the *Christliche Welt.* I acknowledge the incompleteness of my work, a defect inevitable to a three months' study of the subject. What I actually saw and proved by experience, however, I have tried to describe as objectively as is possible to a man who cannot wholly divest himself of his own personality. I earnestly deprecate any sweeping generalisations from the results I have reached, and I ask the reader to bear in mind that whatever I say applies *only* to the industrial population of Saxony.

I have dedicated my book to my fellow-workmen in the factory in token of remembrance, and of the hearty goodwill and affection which I shall always entertain towards them. May they receive from it an assurance of my purpose to devote every energy to the service of their cause. I am aware that I shall be regarded with suspicion, but, coming myself from the humblest rank, I can but claim to be regarded as no less loyal towards them than others profess to be.

I desire to close this preface with an appeal to those of

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I desire to close this preface with an appeal to those of

my own age and station. I urge them to imitate my action, either singly or in groups, but to do so without concealment, and with no other aim than to become acquainted with our less fortunate brothers, to learn to know their condition, their thoughts, their sorrows, and their hopes, and to prove by such a sacrifice, friendship and respect for them, and, afterwards, earnestly and honestly to defend their cause whenever their cause is just.

P. G.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	PREFATORY NOTE BY PROFESSOR ELY	vii
	AUTHOR'S PREFACE	ix
I.	MY WAY	1
II.	THE MATERIAL CONDITION OF MY FELLOW-WORKMEN	13
III.	WORK IN THE FACTORY	41
IV.	THE AGITATION OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY	90
V.	SOCIAL AND POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF MY FELLOW-WORKMEN	111
VI.	EDUCATION AND RELIGION	144
VII.	MORAL CONDITIONS	189
VIII.	RESULTS AND DEMANDS	210

THREE MONTHS IN A WORKSHOP:

A PRACTICAL STUDY.

CHAPTER I.

MY WAY.

EARLY last June I laid away my student's gown and became a factory hand. A cast-off coat, with trousers of the same sort, commissary boots from my soldier days, an old hat and a stout stick formed the equipment for my adventure. To hold the absolutely necessary linen, a well-worn knapsack was added, which, with an extra pair of boots and the regulation brush strapped on top, served admirably as a "Berliner." And thus with roughened hair and beard, to all appearance a genuine journeyman workman, I set out from home betimes one morning with a beating heart, and soon arrived on foot, in Chemnitz, to me till then unknown. Here, in the heart of Saxony's extensive manufacturing industries I lived for nearly three months as a common factory hand, unrecognized and almost entirely without intercourse with my own class. In one of the large machine shops I worked eleven hours daily among the other operatives; with them I lived as one of themselves; with them I spent my evenings and shared my Sunday pleasures. In this way I gathered together abundant material for the estimate of the working man's condition, which I shall try to set forth in the following pages.

I had for years desired to study the "social question" from the standpoint of religion and the Church, but the one thing which had hitherto prevented me from arriving at a clear view, a decided opinion and a permanent conviction, was my inadequate knowledge of facts concerning the actual condition of those on whose account the social or labour question exists. There is, to be sure, a copious literature on the subject. But who was to guarantee for me the correctness of its statements? Where is the truth? With the optimist, who represents the wage-earner's condition as by no means pitiable, or with the pessimist who sees everything in blackest black, and revolution looming in the future? Or is it in those social-democratic pamphlets, which must be regarded as anything but impartial and unprejudiced statements, however keen and significant is their criticism of existing conditions, and which, being nearly always simply documents for agitation, do not pretend to have a scientific value? Or is it, indeed, in the rare utterances of employers, who, on this theme, are quite as partisan as the employed? Is it in our periodical and daily press, which is almost wholly a party press, representing well-defined interests, and therefore inclined to value facts only according to a selfish and onesided standard, and to make the most of them for the benefit of its own party? Or, finally, is the truth in the writings of the clergy? A fund of experience, the results of his work in caring for the souls of his charge, will stand, it is true, at the pastor's disposal; but it is doubtful whether this is sufficient, or whether it agrees with the real state of affairs among wage-earners, who are more and more inclined to hold themselves aloof from the Church and her influences. And there is another thing to be borne in mind; before the holder of the priestly office, everyone, the working man included, is accustomed to clothe himself, literally and figuratively, in his Sunday garments. It is with difficulty, and after all, imperfectly, that the clergyman learns the inmost thoughts of men; those ideas which they only express in unguarded moments when they are among themselves. And it was just these, above all else, which I desired to know, in order to build upon them my further study and future labours; the whole truth, namely, con-

cerning the sentiments of the wage-earning class; its material desires, its mental, moral, and religious characteristics.

But how to discover what is so sedulously concealed from the inquiring eye? The best and most direct, if not precisely the most comfortable way, was to go, *incognito*, among the working class to hear with my own ears and see with my own eyes how it was with them; what were their needs, their hopes, their pleasures; to live myself their monotonous, daily life; to watch for the desires of their hearts, their impulses towards freedom, property, enjoyment, and to search out for myself their innermost motives of conduct. How does the world really appear to the minds of these people who have been for a score of years subjected to the influence of social-democratic leadership? What are their social and political ideas, fruit of the social-democratic agitation; what are their moral characteristics, their deepest religious convictions, the attitude of individuals toward the Church? Above all, have they any religious needs whatever? And if so, how can these be best met? How are minds inflamed and too often justly embittered to be approached? All this I could learn only at the source of information; myself a wage-earner among wage-earners. Therefore to the source I must go.

It was about noon when I arrived in Chemnitz, absolutely without a plan, and trusting to the chance of the moment. To find my bearings, I inquired of the policeman stationed at the nearest corner, whether he could tell me where to obtain work.

"Who are you?" he demanded imperiously, in a tone considerably more unfriendly than I had been accustomed to hear from a policeman.

"Secretary, clerk."

"You'll get no work in Chemnitz."

"I can do any other kind of work," I replied.

"Then go to the Central Inn, Zentral Herberge,[1] Zschopauer Street, you can hear of all kinds of work there soonest."

Thus my next move was clear. I made my way to the Central Inn, which was both inn and employment office, and

[1] This Herberge appears to have been a working man's inn.

made part, if I have been correctly informed, of the Chemnitz Liberal Social Union.

The front room of the inn was occupied by some young fellows in Sunday clothes and several master-mechanics, who were here for the purpose of hiring hands. On a large poster on the wall, I read: "Men in search of employment are not allowed to remain in the front room." I therefore passed on into the back room. Here it was still more forlorn. Several large grey tables, around them some much-worn wooden chairs, some of them bottomless, and an old chest, formed the entire furniture; on the walls hung numerous advertisements of "Inns" (Herbergen) in other cities. The atmosphere of the room was close and heavy. Here were only four persons; three in blue blouses with caps on their heads sitting together, the fourth a little apart from them.

I took my seat modestly in a corner. To tell the truth, my ardour was somewhat dampened by my new surroundings, and at that moment—the only time, however—I seriously contemplated returning.

I sat so for about half-an-hour and waited. Entirely inexperienced in such a position, I was obliged simply to wait for events. They came, in the shape of a thin, active, little man, who sat alone at his table. He approached me with a "Good-day, stranger."

"Good-day, stranger," I answered.

"Are you one of the craft?" he asked, holding his outstretched forefinger before my eyes.

I did not know what he meant, but had a suspicion—which proved correct—that he was a tailor, and said, "No."

"What then?" he went on.

"Secretary, clerk."

"What sends you on the tramp? Say!" and he moved confidentially close; "anything gone wrong with you? You can tell me. You look so respectable—you must have got into some scrape!"

"No," said I curtly.

"Perhaps just out of jail—eh?"

Here was a fine beginning! But I could not let my tailor go on. I tried rudeness.

"Why don't you believe what I say, stupid lout?" I retorted, making use, in my turn, of the universal "du,"[1] which soon became quite natural to me. "I am a private secretary, and for nearly two years I have been working with a clergyman who edits a Christian newspaper. I should have been there now, but my eyes gave out from proof-reading and night work, and the doctor forbade me to use them this summer. But I can't loaf so long, and a fellow doesn't want to be a load at home. So I came here to get something to do in a mill. I sha'n't have to use my eyes there," I added, "much more than if I was loafing or tramping all the time."

In confirmation of this, I produced the labour certificate which had been given me by the editor of the well-known "Christliche Welt," whose assistant I had been for nearly two years. It had been given to me, in case of emergency, and set forth that I had been employed by him as amanuensis and clerk for that length of time.

It had its effect, and my tailor's sympathies were aroused.

Only once again was I obliged to use this certificate. Even in the factory my bare word was accepted, and sundry bits of book-learning which came to light in spite of my best efforts to conceal them, were attributed, just as I wished them to be, to those nightly studies. But it always cost me a sharp mental struggle when I was obliged to palm off this story upon my fellow-workmen, and I take this opportunity of making them a public apology. I sought a long time, but in vain, for a better method, since to be among them *unknown* was the primary condition of attaining my object.

My acquaintance with the tailor, who was perhaps about forty years of age, was a very profitable one. We were soon good friends, and talking busily over a glass of beer; nor was it long

[1] Equivalent to the English "thou." Used only in very familiar language or in the solemn style.

before the three other men, a mason, a stonecutter, and a brick-maker, joined us at our table.

The tailor led the conversation. He looked down somewhat patronisingly, and with fatherly compassion, on the poor devil of a clerk.

"Yes," he exclaimed, "we tailors are certainly much better off than you clerks. We know, at least, what we have learned. A tailor who can make a coat can always get along."

He too was out of work for the moment. He had left his employer only the day before; reluctantly, he said, for he would not lightly leave a master with whose ways he was familiar.

"But you see, clerk," said he, "the man was a hard drinker, and when a boss is that, it's all over with him, and he goes downhill. That was the way with this one, and I can't look on at the misery of a family like that."

He was a thoroughly good-hearted man, but a perfect rattlepate; he talked the wildest nonsense quite seriously to anyone without being encouraged to do so.

"He who doesn't believe in God is lost," was his next remark. "Old Fritz used to say, 'To love Jesus is worth more than much knowledge.' And he was right, for otherwise we shouldn't know anything. Only nature is known to us." Then, in the midst of anecdotes of his trade, he suddenly began to talk of Darwin. "What he says about our descending from monkeys is all foolishness. Monkeys stay monkeys."

"No, we *do* come from monkeys," cried a drunken fellow, a frequenter of the inn, who had staggered in during the conversation, and settled himself to sleep on a wooden bench in the corner.

The three others listened quietly, laughed once or twice, and made their own reflections.

I asked them if they thought it likely that I could find work in a factory in Chemnitz just now. They thought it quite possible; not so the tailor, however, who was right, as I discovered afterwards. He advised me to go into the Zwickañ coal district and look for work in the mines.

"Many a one does that who can't get work here," he said significantly. "Of course it isn't a nice job. It's the last chance, but it's better than starving."

He proposed that we should journey together the following day into Vogtland. But about three o'clock in the afternoon he suddenly disappeared, and I saw him no more.

I did not miss him, for I had already made other friends with whom I had allied myself. Chief among them were the mason and the stonecutter, two sensible, quiet, respectable men, without a trace of the roughness which is popularly supposed to characterize the typical working man. I was soon introduced by them to the other men in the inn, and made to feel at home.

I rapidly learned to distinguish three distinct classes of guests there. The first, and most numerous was composed of young journeymen seventeen or eighteen years old, just out of their apprenticeship, and usually on their first journey. They were well provided with clothing, and generally with money; arriving in small parties late in the afternoon, they kept quietly and shyly apart by themselves, and with few exceptions, spent only one evening and night at the inn.

The second category comprised the genuine "hard customer," the "loafer" by profession. These were, on the average, not less than thirty and often over fifty years of age, drunkards and frequenters of more than one Chemnitz public-house. They have regular beats, which they tramp and "work"; their victims are especially numerous among the generous country pastors and school teachers, over whose kindness of heart they make themselves merry on their return. Now and then they will work for a half or even a whole day, unloading stones, washing bottles, carrying coal, etc. "I never work more than two days in the week," said one of these at one of the less respectable masons' "shelters"; "that is enough to live on. The rest of the time I let other people work." Some of these were evidently in favour with the manager of the inn, or the "father" as he was termed.

Between these two sharply defined-classes there was a third, made up mainly of robust fellows from twenty to thirty years old,

who had already seen a good deal of the world, most of whom had learned their trade but were for the moment, voluntarily or involuntarily, out of employment. If the lack of work continues for any length of time they stand in danger of sinking into common tramps, and of being lost to society for ever. A very marked trait in all of them, at least in all whom I met, is an imperturbable coolness and assurance, and a wide experience.

In addition to these three classes there were usually to be found young fellows from the working class, particularly such as are given to frequent holidays and continual change of situation; but these do not mingle much with the travellers. They remained for the most part in the better room reserved for them, and were warmly welcomed by the inn "father."

I lounged about this central inn for more than a week, usually spending my nights there also—fearful nights they were for me—in the common sleeping-room, with foul, ill-smelling beds, bad air and swarming vermin. I stayed overnight once at the "friendly inn," and found it no better. But another innkeeper has since that time taken charge of the inn.

In the central we were usually shown upstairs to bed in parties, by a pale, beardless, young man, dressed in shabby-genteel clothing, with tousled hair and eye-glasses. He did not talk with the guests, but served as a kind of "boots," washed the dishes and aired the beds in the morning. I was told that he had formerly been a shopkeeper's assistant. He made an indescribably gloomy impression on me; unfortunately he was quite unapproachable.

Among this floating population I found no distinct impulse to social-democratic agitation, save in one instance, where, to the delight of all, and among the jibes of the masons present, a poem on masons, copied from an old number of the *Chemnitz Presse* —a social-democratic sheet—was read aloud. Three or four of the others afterwards copied this for themselves.

But my stay at the inn was only a means to an end. I spent a part of every day—frequently in company with a Westphalian—in looking for work in a factory. We could not find any; every-

where we heard of the dismissing rather than the hiring of hands. The M'Kinley Bill had already cast its shadow before. Work was more easily found even for entire strangers outside the mills. For example, I could myself have obtained employment at once with the inspector of water-works; but this was not to my purpose. To carry out my design I must enter a large factory.

So nothing was left for me but to reveal myself to some manufacturer. The managers of a large machine-shop, the very first to whom I applied, acceded to my wishes in the most disinterested way, and I was at once installed as a common hand. With the exception of these two gentlemen, who assured me of their strict silence, and who have faithfully kept their word, no one in the whole factory knew who I was, and I was treated, in accordance with my own request, precisely like any other hand.

This is the place to set at rest any fears possibly arising in the minds of my old comrades that I communicated my daily observations in the factory to the managers and became an informer. It was agreed between us, as a matter of course, on my entering their employment, that nothing of this sort should be done. But to show also how impossible it would have been, I will add, that I have spoken with the managers only once since the first interview; this was when I left them. Even then we talked of the labour condition only in general terms.

I was employed in the department for the manufacture of machinists' tools, and assigned to a division of five workmen who had to lend a hand whenever needed. In this way I was not confined to any fixed position; an inestimable advantage, for it gave me entire freedom of motion and constant opportunity to approach more or less closely every one of the hundred and twenty workmen.

The work which we had to do was unaccustomed and difficult for me. The castings from the foundry, of the most varying shapes and sizes, often weighing hundreds of pounds, had to be unloaded, weighed, taken to the different workmen, and carried backwards and forwards from one to another according as they were to be manipulated. Then we were called upon to move

ponderous machines to and from the testing room, by means of cranes and rollers, to help take machines to pieces and clean the parts which had become oily and greasy in the testing, to fetch coal, to sweep up iron filings—in short, to obey any and every kind of order. Sometimes we were sent as assistants to the vice-hands (Schlosser), when, for instance, we bored holes, of varying depths, in iron castings. And at first, when I had used the hand-drill thus for almost eleven hours daily, often in the most uncomfortable positions, lying down, stooping over or standing on a ladder, there was many a night when I could hardly go to sleep for the pain in my arms.

In a word we were everybody's servants, waiting on every beck, attending on every whistle. Even the small apprentices from the forge honoured us now and then with an errand, though, to be sure, not without protest from the older men. Frequently we went from one hard task to another, so that it cost me all my strength to hold out. I am thankful to-day to have accomplished it, for I have proved that what I did was undertaken, not from love of adventure, nor idle experiment, but in sober earnest.

But there were also better times, hours, and even days, when there was little or light work. These were the times when I was busiest. I went from one to another of my mates, and while their machines were clicking and clattering away, I turned the conversation to the subjects on which I wanted to know their opinions, or else I was at hand, listening quietly, wherever a group had formed, to the discussion, raillery or dispute, going on among them. While I held an iron shaft or lever, an hour at a time, for a mate, then came my desired opportunity of learning his sentiments and ideas. Indeed, nearly every task in common, every kind of assistance given, afforded favourable opportunities for interesting study. I made no secret of my religious convictions, and this provoked discussion. I let it be seen that I had read and thought on many subjects, and accordingly the most diverse and extraordinary questions were often put to me. They soon christened me "the Doctor," or "the Professor." One declared that a pastor had been lost in me, another took me for a

student in reduced circumstances, a third held out to me the prospect of becoming a member of the Reichstag. In spite of all this, however, I do not believe that an idea of my real position or my real purpose ever crossed the mind of anyone; I have, at least, no reason for thinking otherwise. That an educated man would voluntarily, and, for their sake, even temporarily, resign profession, comfort, and a comparatively high position in life, is simply inconceivable to the people.

The short recess for breakfast, during which we sat about in groups, also gave me many a glimpse into the thoughts of my fellows. The dinner-hour, which I spent daily in the low-priced workmen's restaurants, brought me into close contact with the young unmarried men from my own and other factories. The evenings, too, I seldom spent at home, but in the streets of our quarter, alive, in fair weather, with old and young, or in the sittings of the Social-Democratic Campaign Club, of which I missed not one. Then, too, I spent many an evening with the workmen in their homes, especially toward the end of my stay among them, when I had gradually become well acquainted with them. Sunday found me either on an excursion with some of the young mechanics, or at one of the popular social-democratic workmen's and children's festivals, and on Sunday evenings I was a regular attendant at the public dance-halls, rarely leaving them before the closing hour at midnight. The nights alone belonged to me. After my experience at the inn, I gave up at once the plan of lodging in a workman's family, for I saw that it would simply be beyond my powers to spend nights, more or less sleepless, after the unaccustomed hard labour of the day. I needed, besides, the late evening hours to arrange, in quiet, my impressions of the day, and to write up my note-books. I contented myself, therefore, with renting from a plain family in our suburb, a little room which first a smith and then a small shopkeeper had occupied before me; a simple room such as was occasionally used even by workmen.

But in order that I might not be wholly ignorant of the miseries of lodging-houses, I left the factory in the middle of August, and

spent some time going from one to another in the character of a man out of work. Daily advertisements of "rooms to rent" in the *Chemnitz Tageblatt* guided my steps. I always kept a paper of sweets in my pocket, and dispensed them freely whenever I found children. This opened for me the heart and the lips of the mothers, and secured my remaining some length of time, now and then, alone with the family. In this way I saw about sixty lodging-houses thoroughly. A social democrat in a public meeting at Göttingen has characterised as "unworthy" this method of "reconnoitring the condition of lodgings by pretence of renting, and raising false hopes." I will explain, therefore, that it is free for anyone to test advertised lodgings before renting them, and that on my departure I left no family in doubt as to the fact that I did *not* intend to return.

Finally, I packed my knapsack once more, and, leaving Chemnitz behind, set out for Vogtland, a travelling journeyman again. But I did not go far. I felt that my elasticity had been stretched to the utmost, and stopped short, all too soon indeed, and at the end of August returned home.

So much for my outward experiences and the method which I pursued in my investigations. Now for the investigations themselves and their results.

CHAPTER II.

THE MATERIAL CONDITION OF MY FELLOW-WORKMEN.

About five hundred men were employed in our factory. With all of these, of course, I did not become equally familiar; in fact, I was brought into daily and intimate contact with only about one hundred and fifty of them, most of whom belonged to my department, that, namely, for the construction of machinery, and among whom I gained the experience I am about to impart.

Of these, again, the large majority, seventy or seventy-five per cent., so far as I could discover, were natives of Saxony. I beg that this fact be borne in mind throughout the following pages, and that my experience be not transferred untested to other nationalities. The remaining twenty-five per cent. were of various stocks, about ten per cent. North Germans, five per cent. South Germans, ten per cent. Austrians, and a few Swiss. The large number of Austrians is readily explained by the proximity of the Saxon-Bohemian border; they were, moreover, chiefly German-Bohemians, already naturalised in Saxony.

Predominant among the Saxons, again, were the natives of Chemnitz or its vicinity, or at least of the Erzgebirge and Vogtland.[1] The number of those from the three remaining districts of Saxony was proportionally small, hardly fifteen or twenty per cent. On the other hand the local element was much stronger in the Chemnitz textile industry than in our factory, and in contrast with this again were the building trades, in which Austrians and particularly Czechs formed a surprisingly large contingent.

[1] Many of these were blood relations as well as fellow-countrymen. On a hasty investigation I counted among us four pairs of brothers, five fathers with one son, several with sons-in-law, and one with both son and son-in-law.

I cannot give absolutely accurate statistics concerning the incomes of my fellow-workmen, for I had facts, naturally, from the workmen themselves, and cannot vouch for their perfect accuracy. It was uncommonly difficult to learn the exact truth in this matter. Each man tried to conceal the amount of his earnings from the others; he who earned more, in order to avoid the reputation of a sneak and favourite, or to prevent his mates from demanding an equal wage; he who earned less, from shame or fear of the taunts and ridicule of thoughtless comrades.

Wages were evidently suffering depression at that time from the unsuccessful first of May demonstration and the impending M'Kinley Bill. New employés were taken on at reduced wages, every request for increase of pay was refused, and the dissatisfied were dismissed.

To begin with my own case, I received at first as a green hand twenty pfennigs [1] per hour; this was the usual pay of a beginner, but on application it was soon increased (especially in the case of a married man) by one or two pfennigs. With the exception of Mondays and Saturdays, when I worked one hour less time than on other days, my daily wage thus amounted to two marks thirteen pfennigs; on the two days mentioned, one mark ninety-three pfennigs, or for the whole week, twelve marks seventy-eight pfennigs. From this total a reduction was regularly made by my assessment for the sick insurance fund, and fines for lateness and carelessness. The other hands earned from twelve to fifteen marks, or on an average, about fourteen marks per week; men working at the vice, from fifteen to twenty-one marks; their foremen from twenty-two to twenty-eight; drillers, working on time, fifteen to nineteen. The piece-workers, on the other hand, earned considerably more; joiners, on an average, twenty-five, turners from twenty to thirty, groovers and drillers from twenty to thirty-five, while here and there an individual workman would receive as much as forty marks per week. The machinist in charge of the large engine earned, according to his own state-

[1] The German mark of 100 pfennigs is equivalent to one shilling (English), or twenty-four cents (American).

ment, for fourteen hours daily labour besides regular work on Sunday mornings, twenty-four marks weekly. The incomes of the erecters (monteurs), as well as some of the master-mechanics, were considerably augmented by a so-called percentage on machines completed by them. The yearly income of the latter, by their own computation, must reach an average of eighteen hundred or two thousand marks. Many of those who received the highest wage were young fellows with an alleged minimum monthly income of one hundred marks. Some of these estimates must be considered as too low rather than too high. In some machine-shops the wage was said to be higher than in ours, but the work more exhausting and the hours longer; I cannot, of course, vouch for the correctness of this assertion.

From all this it is plain that there can be no question of want in this class of wage-earners. At all events, it is, comparatively speaking, one of the most prosperous and most favourably circumstanced of the whole body of working men in Saxony, even when one constantly keeps in view the fact that the highest figures given above hold good but for a small proportion of the workmen, that the average monthly wage is eighty marks, and that a pay of thirty-two pfennigs per hour is considered highly satisfactory.

Many of the unskilled workmen whose earnings fell very much short of the sums just mentioned, and who had besides large families, cares and debts, but who were steady and industrious, respecting themselves and their obligations, endeavoured to add to their incomes by outside earnings. During their scanty leisure of evenings or Sundays they turned to all sorts of outside work, sometimes well, sometimes ill paid, sometimes light and pleasant, sometimes hard and disagreeable. A packer, for example, a simple good-natured fellow, who talked often and affectionately of his wife and children, big and little, spent his Sunday mornings in pressing clothing for a tailor, while in the afternoon and evening he played the part of dancing-master in a neighbouring village. Another, formerly a tailor, pursued his old calling out of hours, to get pocket-money for himself, for, as he told us, he

carried home his fortnightly earnings of twenty-seven marks to his wife and children. One man worked as a carpenter; one, who had been a barber's apprentice but had not served out his time, went from house to house in the evening shaving his mates and acquaintances; more than one played dance-music on Sunday; one turner played for students' carousals, another worked as a cooper and a driller acted as street-cardriver in Chemnitz during the increased Sunday travel. A man who worked at the vice, a good-natured individual of forty, who made his son a merchant, but who was an ardent if not an excessive lover of spirituous liquors, served regularly as waiter in the evenings and on Sundays in one of the better-class popular working men's restaurants, but this was done quite as much from the hope of getting a drink for nothing now and then, as from the desire of earning anything. Finally, there was more than one among us who drove a flourishing trade with his fellow-workmen in cheap cigars at three, four, or even five pfennigs a-piece. There were many other ways of earning a little, such as putting in coal for the managers and master-mechanics, cutting the grass in their gardens, and similar small undertakings.

A few, also, added to their income by overtime or Sunday work in the factory itself. For the most part, however, this questionable advantage belonged to men specially appointed by the master-mechanics for the care of the workshops on Saturday, after work had ceased, and the cleaning and necessary repairing of the engines on Sunday mornings.

Wives, and sometimes, but not too often, the older children, brought an addition to the family income. It is impossible for me to make exact statements on this point. I can only say that this women's work was of the most varied kinds: tailoring, sewing for shops, washing, scrubbing, peddling or dealing in small garden produce; sometimes they went into stocking factories, but more frequently used, at home, a knitting-machine.

Keeping lodgers and dinner-boarders—where the whole burden fell on the wife—was also regarded as a means of augmenting the factory earnings, but hardly with reason. As far as I could observe, there was seldom any pecuniary advantage from them to

offset the drudgery of the wife and the sacrifice of domestic comfort, to say nothing of the deeper, though exceptional, injuries they occasioned.

But this last concerns only the more ill-paid among the workmen, for I could see that all who were able to do without this form of subsidiary earnings, did so with few exceptions.

But my picture would remain incomplete did I not give it a golden setting, and report the five householders reckoned among our operatives; the five, at least, whom I myself knew. One, a turner who worked by the piece, a man of extraordinary assiduity, who denied himself supper, and who was nicknamed *commerzienrath*,[1] had earned his house by his own labour, and by what some called his thrift, others his parsimony. This was true also of a second workman; while a third, also a turner, had inherited a flourishing inn in a neighbouring village, and a smith and a polisher each owned his dwelling-house. There was one man in my own section, a pleasant young fellow, well liked by everyone, the son of a farmer in the environs, who was said to be worth so many thousand marks that he was under no necessity of working, but this was probably exaggeration. Finally, in my character of expert, I once drew up a contract for an elderly workman whose father had just died, leaving several hundred marks to be divided among his children, by which my mate made over his share to a brother, taking instead a mortgage on the latter's house, because, as he told me, he did not need ready-money. But it is hardly necessary to say that these fortunate house-owners and capitalists were the exception among us.

I repeat, however, what I have already said; in our group of working men there was no question of actual want. It is true, to be sure, that there was no superfluity. But the total yearly income, averaging, as I have said, eight or nine hundred marks, permits a workman with a moderate-sized family, to live without serious anxiety, even granted the present high rates of food and house-rent. But the outlook becomes at once far less favourable when the income, as in the case of the common hands, amounts

[1] A title sometimes given to wealthy merchants and manufacturers.

only to six or seven hundred marks, or when sickness or death or any other misfortune, a longer term of service in the Landwehr or the Reserve, or a change of employment, frequently coupled with a period of idleness, consumed a great part of even the larger incomes. Among those whose incomes reached twelve or fifteen hundred marks, a higher degree of comfort, and even some luxury, was possible, and often indeed, to my joy, to be found. But on the whole it must be confessed, that even with the full average earnings mentioned, the standard of living in the workmen's families can only be of the most modest, let us say at once, of the most cramped description.

This will be seen by the far from exhaustive observations I made on the food, clothes, and lodging of my fellow-workmen, and which I give in substance in spite of their incompleteness.

My fellow-workmen did not all live in the suburb where our factory stood, and where I myself had found quarters; many lived in the city itself, or in villages more or less remote. There were several cases where home and work were an hour apart. The oldest man in my section, well over fifty years of age, had so far to go that he preferred to stay with his son-in-law in our suburb during the week, and only on Sunday to visit wife and home, which another of our number, having seen, could not praise too highly for its neatness and cosiness. I can give almost no details of the surroundings of those who lived at a distance, and can only say that those living in the city itself fared worse, and those coming from remote and often enchanting country spots, undeniably better, generally speaking, than we in our quarter.

Our suburb lay so near to Chemnitz that the boundary line between them could no longer be determined. They overlapped each other, and as often happens in densely-populated Saxony, our suburb at the other end ran on into a long chain of adjacent villages. This conjunction fixed the plan and the appearance of our quarter. It was half-city, half-village; between the old low-built country houses, with their characteristic high gables and small windows, rose the forlorn city tenement houses, two or three

stories in height. There was only one little part left where the old village character still remained, with its narrow, zig-zag alleys and lanes, and humble old-fashioned cottages huddled together without form or plan. But close beside it there had grown up, with marvellous rapidity, a purely urban quarter, with two broad, parallel streets and straight rows of barrack-like tenement houses, whose bleak fronts were, however, softened and adorned by tiny green gardens. Thus the exterior form of the suburb reflected the economic change through which its inhabitants were passing, the evolution of farmers and peasants into factory hands.

According to the price of lodgings or to individual inclination and habit, often from pure chance, my fellow-workmen lived partly in the new quarter, partly in the old houses, whose interiors had been generally remodelled on the plan of the new, and divided into several lodgings called "apartments" (Parten); I do not know to which of these I should give the preference. The old rural dwellings had low rooms, small windows, and narrow entrances, and their exteriors were often shabby and dilapidated; but as an offset to these disadvantages, almost every house of this kind stood in its own garden-plot in the midst of fresh shrubbery. The other kind had larger and higher rooms, with more light and air, but they had the forlorn aspect of barracks, and were besides hastily and poorly built. The meanest and most ill-contrived dwellings, however, were those in the rear of these new houses, which united the bad features of both the others, and which lacked no element of wretchedness in construction, arrangement or surrounding.

It is difficult to call the interior commonly occupied by our working people by the name of homes. Or may we indeed so designate a two-windowed room with an adjoining one-windowed recess, which cannot be heated? Yet, if my eyes were to be trusted, just this and nothing more formed the abodes of a very large proportion of our workmen's families. Hence, they spoke of their homes only as "rooms."[1] "I am going to hire a new

[1] *Stube.* The more elegant word and the one applied to the rooms of the better classes is *Zimmer.*

room;" "What do you pay for your room?" were expressions in everyday use.

Far better, roomier, and more homelike than these, were the lodgings which consisted of one room with two recesses (inaccurately styled "alcoves" in common language), or one "alcove" with two rooms which could be heated; but often here, as always in the case of the single room, there was no kitchen, although, on the other hand, every sort of lodging I have enumerated had a so-called "garret"; *i.e.* a small loft partitioned off under the roof and provided with a scuttle.

Most of the more modern houses, especially those built on the city plan, contained a number of lodgings such as I have described; those differently arranged were depressingly few, and larger ones were not to be found in the tenement house proper. For the few persons in the place who desired them, there were occasional houses built to order, and here and there a small villa or similar rustic structure.

The rents of these lodgings was large in comparison with their real value, as well as with the incomes of most of the workmen, but somewhat smaller than that of similar dwellings in the city proper. I cannot quote prices; the few which I find in my note-books form insufficient data, and I will not give them. But they were certainly less than the rates in Berlin.

It is difficult also to make any general classification of these lodgings according to the size of the incomes of their inhabitants. It may be said, of course, that the smaller "rooms" were occupied by men earning the minimum wage, by fathers of large and therefore expensive families, or by young married people with one child or none; while the larger rooms represented the larger wage. Not infrequently, however, those receiving the smaller pay were to be found in the larger rooms, but in such cases they always took a number of lodgers to enable them to meet the high rent. I may as well say here, that a wail of distress always went through the factory when rent-day came round, and on the pay-day preceding there was usually very little left over to provide for other needs than this.

And now as to the interiors, which were comfortable, indifferent, or wretched, depending on many and varied causes. A sofa, a round table, a chest of drawers, a good-sized mirror, some cane-seated and more wooden chairs, and a few pictures were almost always to be seen ; not seldom, too, a sewing-machine, a hanging lamp, and a wardrobe of showy appearance but very flimsy construction. In the corner or at the side where the stove stood, hung the few cooking utensils ; in the small room adjoining, which was usually almost wholly filled by bedsteads, were pots, old shoes, and other rubbish, perhaps also another press. In the case of young married people, one or another of the above named articles would often be missing, the sofa, the mirror, or the clock, circumstances not allowing their purchase, since, in this section of the population, the marriages are portionless. But, in such a household, the number of the children and their ages, the morals and manners of the husband, the employment and, above all, of course, the character of the wife, her natural ability, and her bringing-up, decided whether or not the reigning spirit should be one of order, neatness, intelligent management, and inviting friendliness, in spite of narrow quarters and the utmost simplicity. I have been in the homes of many of my comrades who earned but a few more pfennigs hourly than I myself did, and who had many children and few possessions, but where it was a pleasure to stay. I have visited drillers and polishers, piece-workers, earning from forty to fifty marks weekly, in homes no plainer than my father's own, with white covers on sofa, table, and commode, white curtains before the flower-filled windows, and many pictures on the spotless walls ; and I have seen the opposite of all this among people with incomes large or small, children few or many, furniture new or old.

However—and I desire to state this sharply and emphatically —the families who, with all the restrictions of their circumstances and their dwellings, yet sought to maintain a certain standard of decency and refinement, and did actually maintain it, were very much more numerous than those with whom, for whatever reason, this was not the case.

The saddest feature of the whole matter of housing the people was that one which I was so often obliged to deplore, namely, the disproportion between the size of the rooms and the number of their occupants. Lodgings like those I have described might serve young married people with a child or two as tolerably satisfactory and healthy dwelling-places, but when two or three more children made their appearance, and when, in order to make both ends meet, strangers must be boarded and lodged, conditions existed which can be more easily commiserated than depicted. Yet such was, I need hardly say, the rule. The great majority of families had a troop of children as well as lodgers and table boarders, and perfect domiciliary conditions were, of course, possible only where neither the one nor the other was found. When a childless couple, or an aged married pair whose children were grown and settled for themselves, had a fair or full income, they preferred to be alone, and they lived comfortably and pleasantly. Such was the case with a polisher whose youngest lad was just out of school. I visited him more than once, and found it simply delightful. There were other conditions which must still be called favourable, such as I found, for example, in the family of one of the hands in my own section, who lived in an old farm-house which had been converted into a lodging-house. Here the father, mother, grown-up step-daughter, and three little children occupied a large corner room, an "alcove" with one window, and a garret. The young girl slept alone in the garret, the others in the alcove, where the baby had a capacious cradle, and the two children occupied one bed and the parents another. It was the common practice, as far as I could observe it, for parents as well as children, even older children, and brothers and sisters, indiscriminately to sleep together in one bed. I found a better state of affairs in this respect only twice, in the case of childless couples, when husband and wife had each a bed. Less fortunate than those above-mentioned were the conditions in the family of another of my friends, consisting of the young parents, a two-year-old child, an infant, and an outsider, a factory-girl. These had to content themselves with one small

room on the ground floor and the loft where the lodger slept. Into this single room, which was at once living-room, bedroom, guest-room, and kitchen, were crowded a bed for the parents, a baby-carriage, a table, some chairs, a commode, a wardrobe, and all the cooking apparatus. But even this was comparatively comfortable. There is worse to come. Another workman of my section, whom I often visited, and who had an industrious, energetic wife, a cook before her marriage, and two children, tenderly loved and cared for—a girl of nine and a boy of six years—lived, together with three young apprentices of our mill, in one small two-windowed room, one alcove, and a garret, in a crowded rear-tenement house. The parents slept in one bed, the children in another, the two beds filling nearly the whole room, the three young men in the somewhat larger garret, likewise in but two beds, so that two, strangers to each other, occupied the same bed, and only one was by himself, a privilege for which he had, of course, to pay correspondingly more. How widespread this custom was is shown by the fact that when, in my search for lodgings, I expressed a desire to sleep alone—meaning in a room by myself—I was almost always understood to mean alone in a bed.

But the most wretched lodgings which I saw were those of another of our workmen. Here, the arrangements were actually unfit for human beings. The man was a machinist of long standing in the factory ; no longer so young, well over fifty, an honest, good-natured little fellow with whom I liked to talk. His wife was sickly and half decrepit, subject to hæmorrhage. He told me the story of their life and love in endless detail, as the people do, yet not without a certain touch of romance, and with the absolute ingenuousness and friendly confidence that springs up so quickly in such places between comrades young or old. Their children were already grown up and married. They had with them only one grandchild, affectionately cared for, but, on the other hand, they lodged five strangers. This man's dwelling-place was as follows: one "room," one alcove, a chamber with one window and a loft. In the small chamber were two beds, in one

of which a horse-cardriver slept, and in the other two masons, Bohemians. The invalid wife slept in the alcove alone; for years she had been unable to have anyone lie beside her, and her husband slept, therefore, on a sofa in the living-room, which was used by all the members of that household for talking, eating, and smoking, from early morning until ten o'clock in the evening, which, for these people, means late into the night and into their time for sleep. The two masons having drunk their coffee prepared in this same room, left the house at half-past four in the morning, and the cardriver came home from his hard work at half-past nine in the evening, and must then have his supper. How was a really refreshing night's rest possible for the husband and wife? Yet the worst remains to be told. In the garret were also two beds, one of them sublet to a young newly-married pair who were out at work all day, and had literally nothing they could call their own; in the other slept the grandchild, a girl twelve years of age. The condition of affairs in this and other similar households, even with the best intention on the part of all the members, may easily be imagined.

If, in addition to the regular inhabitants, relatives or friends came on a visit, their accommodation was coupled with almost incredible crowding. The workman last mentioned, whose condition was so distressing, once had a visit from a daughter married in Thuringia; she brought two children with her, "a snake who wants to squeeze her parents to death," her father impatiently said. The two children slept in the garret with the other twelve-year-old grandchild, three in one bed, while the daughter was lodged with relatives in the neighbourhood. And this is the state of things in that class of wage-earners which I have felt bound to call comparatively well-to-do!

The greatest and worst factor of evil is undoubtedly the keeping of lodgers and boarders. This is the bane of the German working man's home, but in the large majority of cases it is an economic necessity. The trifling profit which results from it is an ardently desired addition to the housekeeper's fund. It is not to be supposed that the working men trouble themselves about

strangers for pleasure only. On the contrary, numerous instances convinced me that whoever could do so kept his house free from outsiders. But when it was not to be avoided, young men were always taken in preference to young women.

The sleeping accommodations were of distinct kinds, both the better and the worse. The most pernicious and the most dangerous sort from a moral and sanitary point of view, has happily been prohibited by the Chemnitz Chief of Police, a just regulation, well worthy of imitation. By this ordinance a minimum of space, defined in terms of cubic metres, is prescribed for each sleeper, and private families are strictly forbidden to lodge young men and young women at the same time. During my visits and investigations I found about the following results.

(*a*) Sleeping places in the rooms partitioned off in the garret, as I have before described them. Here almost every family was in the habit of keeping from one to three beds, so that often no storey of the house was more thickly crowded at night than this one under the eaves, whose steep ceiling consisted of the bare rafters and tiles. In the old houses, and especially during the heat of summer, they must have been places of nightly martyrdom; in the more solidly built of the modern houses they were, however, among the best bedrooms. In any case, this kind of sleeping-quarters had the great advantage of isolating the lodgers from the family at night, and it was also the more frequent kind, more or less expensive according to its degree of goodness. The cheaper sort were taken by the poor masons and ditchers from Bohemia, who worked here only in the months of summer. The weekly charges averaged two marks, which included coffee in the morning. Apprentices were lodged by the small master-mechanics, acquaintances sometimes, but often all strangers to one another. In the case of lesser officials, small tradesmen and similar households where a servant is usually kept and space is scanty, the maid's bed alone occupies the garret. With the exception of the bedstead and a few pegs in the walls, there is ordinarily no furniture in the room, unless, indeed, the lodger brings with him either a commode, which

seldom happens, or a chest, which is often seen. The few clothes which such a child of humanity possesses are hung upon the pegs, the linen and other trifles laid away in the chest, and the extra pair of boots put by in the corner. Whoever, from choice or necessity, sought the very cheapest shelter, rented such a garret with a single bed, in common with a friend.

(*b*) The second kind of lodgings is in the dwelling-rooms of the family. The most undesirable among them, namely, those in a family occupying but a single room, and such as are forbidden by the city ordinance to which I have alluded, if not wholly done away with, are yet very seldom found. He who sleeps with several others in an alcove (in the city even the kitchen is sometimes used for this purpose) pays about a mark, he who has an empty alcove, furnished, that is, only with one bed, pays at least two marks weekly. Finally we come to the two best, but most infrequent lodgings of all, small, plainly furnished rooms with two or three beds, rented by young apprentices, usually friends, from well-to-do families, for which each pays two marks, and similar rooms with a single bed, which are naturally in less demand, owing to their high cost (three marks weekly) and which form the transition to the ordinary plain bachelor quarters of the student class.

The prices which I have quoted are, of course, taken in the mean, but are fairly accurate. They always include coffee in the morning, and often in the evening. They are not high ; indeed for the young bachelor who usually earns as much as a married man, and has no one to provide for, they are among the smallest of his necessary expenditures. Notwithstanding, it often happens that the lodger absconds with the rent. The Chemnitz *Local Advertiser* contained, almost daily, a notice to this effect, and it must be remembered that only a small proportion of such cases is brought to public attention. When it happens there is usually a box locked, but empty, or filled with stones, left behind as security. Especially is this the expedient of the unemployed. They make a pretence of working in order to mislead their new landlord, they leave the house at the regular hour in the morning, spend the day partly in the public-houses, partly in aimless

wandering, partly in looking for employment; at the hour of quitting work they come back to their lodgings. At last the convenient moment arrives and the bird flies—not to return. The family always suffers a heavy loss.

I have less to say, naturally, about the dress of the working men. In the factory they wore, of course, old and dirty clothes. A pair of trousers, substantial, but shabby and shiny from long service, a waistcoat and a blue linen blouse was the ordinary costume. They liked to take off their boots and put on wooden shoes in the factory; eleven hours of walking and standing about in boots on tiled floors is too hard for the feet. Only a few worked bare-headed; either on account of the flying dust and dirt, or in consequence of a long-established custom; nearly every one wore a cheap, light, cap, or an old hat, which served also on the way to and from the factory. Those of us who had to lift and carry much, wore in addition aprons which we contrived for ourselves out of old bagging. If it were intensely hot—as many a day it was last summer—and the air, in spite of all the water sprinkling for which three of us were detailed, became stifling in the rooms crowded with sweating men, we threw off our waistcoats, rolled up our sleeves, and opened wide the fronts of blouse and shirt. Drawers were seldom worn, but generally woollen stockings and coloured woollen shirts. I saw only a few coloured linen shirts, and a very few coarse white ones worn by some joiners and carpenters. Women as well as men habitually wore woollen clothing from preference, ignorant of Professor Jaeger's sanction, but in long proved knowledge of what is valuable in his "system."

It was the universal custom to change the blue linen blouse every week, and it was at once noticed if an unwashed one were worn on Monday morning. Only a certain kind of work-suit, made of stout blue English jean was worn longer; these suits were bought for cash, with the consent of the managers, from a one-armed clerk in our own office, and being cheap and good, difficult to wash and not easily soiled, could be worn two or even three weeks without offence.

However old and shiny the clothes might be, yet much care

was generally taken that they should not be ragged. When this happened to be the case, especially among the married men, it was the subject of much comment. More than once my attention was called to such instances, with the half-apologetic, half-pitying words, "Well, it can't be otherwise, his wife is a regular slattern."

Only a few among us observed the custom, general in Berlin among young fellows with good wages, we were told, of exchanging the working dress for a better one before quitting the factory at the end of the day. Most of us went home in our working clothes, with an old coat or jacket over the blouse, and the tin pail in which we usually brought our morning coffee swinging from the hand. Some of the men, however, changed their trousers, or at least put on a pair of blue overalls over the better ones during work.

The Sunday apparel was the exact opposite of the working clothes just described. It was almost without exception, not only becoming, but fashionable, often so much so that on Sunday I did not recognise many of my workmates at first sight. To the young unmarried fellows in particular, their Sunday appearance was of the gravest importance. At the public balls, in one of the better resorts, where, on Sunday evenings, young officers in citizen's dress, reporters, tradesmen, mechanics and factory-hands were accustomed to dance with handsome shop-girls and showily-dressed maid-servants, they were hardly to be distinguished in most cases from the dancers belonging to the higher classes, or if at all, only by their larger and coarser hands, and the absence of eye-glasses. Nor were the married men without their Sunday finery. But their interest in dress naturally decreased in proportion to the prudence, economy and simplicity of the individual, to the size of his family, and the love and care bestowed upon it. Then, too, those who had come from the country, or who still lived there, did not dress so fashionably as the men from the city or suburbs. Nevertheless the process of assimilation was going on rapidly among them in this respect. Red ties and the enormous turner-hats that give such an indescribably comic expression to young and beardless faces were less worn than might have

been supposed. In conclusion it must be said that almost everyone dressed beyond his means. This is a true Saxon propensity; but what they lavished on their backs they spared from their stomachs.

Concerning the food and sustenance of my comrades there is much to be said. In the first place, during factory hours we had only two recesses for eating; twenty minutes for breakfast, from eight o'clock until twenty minutes past eight, and the dinner hour from twelve until one. The nearly eleven hours of labour, from six in the morning until six in the evening, were otherwise uninterrupted. Only the apprentice lads were allowed a half-hour's recess at four o'clock in the afternoon; all others who felt the need of food snatched a hasty mouthful at their work. The afternoon recess, which had formerly been the universal custom, had been given up voluntarily by the men themselves, in order to leave off work at six o'clock.

Breakfast was eaten inside the factory by almost everyone, only those who lived in the immediate neighbourhood going home for it. There were also a few who went to a small shop near by, where they could buy good cheese very reasonably, and this they ate, with the bread they themselves had brought, either in the owners' crowded dwelling-room, or in the shop itself. Some again, had their breakfasts brought to them by wife or child with anxious punctuality.

But the great majority ate the breakfast they had brought in the factory itself. Here they formed themselves into groups, entirely at their own pleasure. When the weather was moderately fine, they sat out of doors, that is, in the large factory-yard, alongside the wooden paling which separated it from the railway. Here they improvised seats out of old packing-cases, boards or iron castings. Part of the men ate their breakfast in the dining-hall, a spacious, well-lighted room on the ground floor, with bare white-washed walls, long wooden benches and tables, a stove, and the bar of the canteen agent, who was also the driver of the establishment. The young vice-hands, however, usually remained beside their work while they ate.

There were few formalities about breakfast; no one thought of making a preparatory toilet. The shortness of the recess forbade even a thorough washing of dirty hands; we had to be contented with wiping them hastily on our equally dirty aprons, or on such makeshifts as cotton waste or shavings. It cannot be said that this interfered with our appetites, for at eight o'clock we were all ravenously hungry. No food ever tasted better to us than this second breakfast after two hours of morning toil.

It was a very substantial meal, huge slices of bread and butter, and always something besides: sausage, raw meat, cheese, occasionally hard-boiled eggs or pickles. The longer since the last pay-day, the more prominent was cheese in our bill of fare. The supply of food was always generously ample, except in the case of day-labourers, or men with large families and a very small wage. We had always something to drink; this, in our occupation, was quite as necessary to us as good food. The men drank, about equally, coffee, hot or cold, and buttermilk, a cheap and wholesome summer drink universally popular among the working population of Chemnitz. I noticed that only a few of the more prosperous indulged in Bavarian beer, and even they only immediately after pay-day. On the other hand, the use of domestic beer at seven pfennigs the bottle, was constantly on the increase, and more and more took the place of brandy-drinking. The chief cause of this change is the invention of the familiar patent cork; and the workman who formerly had his brandy-flask in his pocket now carries an equally transportable bottle of beer. So a small technical invention becomes a great social and ethical influence—in this instance for good—and accomplishes more than many sermons and other efforts at reform.

Food and drink might be either brought from home or purchased at the canteen. The older, married, and therefore prudent men, pursued the former, the unmarried the latter method. Nothing could be bought at our canteen except bread, rolls, three kinds of sausage, cheese, and now and then eggs, besides coffee and beer. Prices were not high, yet the seller had his profit: a pot of coffee with sugar cost four pfennigs, a bottle

of beer seven pfennigs. One of the regulations was especially appreciated by us. We were four or five hundred in number; granting that only a fourth of us patronised the canteen, still nearly a hundred men would have been crowded about the counter every morning, and the last must have been served only at the end of the breakfast recess. To avoid this difficulty, one of the hands, especially detailed, was permitted to go the rounds of the men an hour before the recess, to receive their orders, and to bring the orders, shortly before eight o'clock, to each individual in his place; the hot coffee was brought in a large, brightly-polished tin can, from which each man filled his mug.

However primitive our arrangement for breakfast was, it was not felt to be a hardship. All saw that nothing else was possible, and the meal was heartily enjoyed.

As I have said, we had the ordinary dinner-hour, from twelve to one o'clock. Everybody's rule was to go home for dinner if he could do so. In our factory this was feasible for a very large number, and so our suburb presented daily an interesting sight. Exactly at twelve o'clock, when the steam-whistles gave their signal, as if by magic the quiet streets were suddenly alive with men hastening rapidly hither and thither in all directions, singly or in groups; whoever made part of the throng beheld the same faces day after day. The same scene was repeated an hour later, just before one o'clock, when the same signal emptied the streets once more. To-day the shrill screech of the steam-pipe regulates the daily life of the dwellers in our factory towns as formerly the sound of ringing bells. For, as at noon and one o'clock, so the whistles shriek in the morning at half-past five and six o'clock, and again at the close of work in the evening.

I am, of course, unable to say what was eaten for dinner in the various families. Although I often asked what they had had for dinner, I was frequently not told the truth. Then it was to be inferred that the meal had been a scanty one. Meat, at such high prices, was naturally not to be had every day, still a prudent and thrifty housewife managed to have it oftener than her opposite. Within the fixed limit set by the income, everything,

in this regard, depends on the wife. A good manager—and they are *not* in the minority—can accomplish the impossible. The wives of two of my more straitened fellow-workmen, whose earnings did not amount to fifteen marks weekly, told me that they always had meat on the table in one form or another. The first of these had one child of two years and another of six months; the second, a child of nine and one of five years old, besides two in the churchyard and one yet unborn. The former had also a young woman lodger, the latter two vice-hands as boarders. Both these women had been in service before marriage. On the other hand, there was one of our erecters (monteurs) whose wages were comparatively high; but one had only to see his wife to know why his clothes looked so neglected, and why, as he told me once, he preferred to do his own cooking without her help. Their Sunday dinner was said to be of dogs-meat.

Instead of butter, fat and oil were extensively used in many families. Finally it may be laid down as a universal rule that the fare was better just after than just before a pay-day.

Two local co-operative stores were well patronised, particularly on the evening of pay-day, when purchases were made for several days in advance. One of these stores was avowedly a social-democratic undertaking; the other recently established; both were flourishing.

Many families, as I have already said, besides their immediate members had table-boarders; these were usually their lodgers as well, but there were often other young men and women as well as those married men, who lived at too great a distance from their work, and who wished to spare their families the inconvenience of bringing them their meals, or who desired to avoid the rather expensive dinner of the restaurants, and were yet unwilling to take a cold luncheon in the factory. But on Sundays it was the universal custom to eat where one lodged. As far as I could learn, meat was eaten more frequently, and in other respects the fare was always better in families where boarders were taken, while the price of board was always lower than that which we paid at the restaurants.

There was another comparatively large class who dined in the humblest restaurants of the vicinity. This was chiefly composed of young and unmarried men earning good wages, who were uncomfortable in the narrow quarters of the working men, which the hurry of noon-day, in the one room that must serve for kitchen and dining-room alike, made more than ever perceptible, and who preferred the quiet and orderliness of the restaurant; or who lived far away, and had no acquaintances among the families of the neighbourhood. Being myself in this position at first, I adopted their plan. I dined successively at three restaurants, one of which I continued to patronise for three-quarters of my stay in the factory. It was small and unpretending, but well conducted. The landlord's pretty daughter served us in turn, according to our seats at table, beginning each day with a different person in order to offend nobody. The food was ample and fairly palatable. Every other day we had a roast, very popular in spite of its insipidity; this alternated with boiled meat and vegetables, which I liked better. In addition, everyone received a liberal supply of potatoes and a large slice of bread; and the whole cost, a mug of brown beer included, was forty pfennigs. Good order prevailed around the table, politeness and decorum; all ate quietly, without hurrying. There was little talk but much reading; when one had finished with his paper, another was waiting to receive it. The same state of things was to be found in the second restaurant. The third, less frequented, stood lower down in the scale; this was the so-called "Drivers' Room" of a large establishment. These drivers' rooms are very numerous, and, socially and morally, very questionable institutions. Generally untidy, cramped and uninviting, they are the connecting link with the disreputable bars and beer-saloons, frequently connected with stores and booths, which are the worst of places for encouraging drunkenness among the lower classes, through the ease and rapidity of the service and the possibility of instant retreat.

Within the city, the City Ordinary, *die städtische Speiseanstalt*, partially took the place of the restaurants I have described; it

was open daily from twelve till one o'clock, and frequented daily by hundreds of working men and women, and it is said to be a very profitable concern. The four big dining-rooms on the ground and first floors were always thronged at the hour of dinner; even in the large bare courtyard tables and benches were arranged. Two dinners were served, one for thirty, the other for fifty pfennigs. For the latter, the tables were regularly set, as in our restaurants in the suburbs, but no beer was given; the former consisted of a bowl filled with beans, rice, barley, pease or similar vegetables, with generally a slice of sausage or meat, which everyone had to fetch for himself. During my stay at the working men's inn I tried both kinds of dinner, and found the food in each to be sufficient and moderately good. On one occasion I was ejected from the place. A loafer in worn-out clothing of a stylish cut, with long grey hair and the air of a decayed artist, a frequent guest at the inn, had offered for sale there three second-class dinner tickets for five pfennigs apiece. I took one, and went with it, at noon, to the ordinary. As I offered it, and proceeded to take up my bowl of pease, I was sharply asked how I had come by my ticket, which was quite unlike those of my companions. I explained, but was evidently not believed; they told me mine was a charity ticket, and probably stolen, and promptly turned me out of doors. When I returned to the inn and told my story, I brought down on myself a second volley of oaths from the inn "father," which was afterwards repeated whenever we "who wore out his chairs by sitting in them all day long, without buying anything to eat," went elsewhere for dinner. I was not the only one who hung about the inn. Many a hungry fellow without a cent used to go into the ordinary, and, mingling with the crowd around the tables, eat the scraps of food left in the bottoms of the bowls. One of my new friends secretly but emphatically recommended this to me as the best and cheapest way of getting a dinner.

Others among the workmen spent the whole of the morning within the factory. They were young and old, married and single; a large company, including all those who lived at a long

distance from the factory and were too poor or too prudent to buy hot dinners. They made shift with a cold luncheon like their breakfast, and with coffee; or they warmed over the vegetables, previously prepared by wife or mother, which they brought in their tin pail in the morning. To these men the dingy dining-hall was a real blessing, for, as all the workshops were closed during the dinner-hour, this was the only room in which they could remain. I was heartily sorry for these men, especially the older ones, who had eleven hours of no light labour, daily, and who yet lacked almost every comfort in the single hour of rest. Only let one imagine himself in their place; let us try for ourselves to eat, day after day, cold or warmed-up food, and we shall see that it is no fit dinner for a man who does an honest day's work. The people themselves feel this very keenly. If I came back to the factory a little before working hours, and greeted them with the common salutation of "Gesegnete Mahlzeit,"[1] it often happened that someone would return a bitter reply; this is no Mahlzeit, least of all a blessed one.

If the weather were fine, or the day very warm, so that the body was in a state of lassitude and exhaustion, the men, after their meal was over, went into the open factory-yard and stretched themselves out in the shade on the piles of boards on the ground, for an after-dinner nap. As we thus lay, spiritless and weary, side by side, the silence was seldom broken, and then usually only by an exclamation, bitter in spite of its jesting form, as, "Easy life the working man's!"

One feature was almost entirely lacking in our case, that was the fetching of dinners from home to the factory. This may have been on account of our greater distances, for in the city the custom was general, when hundreds of workmen's wives and children were to be seen daily, just before mid-day, hurrying through the streets, dinner-pail in hand, in order to be punctually at the work-bench of the hungry husband, or father, or mother, awaiting them. And, resting on the benches of the city parks, were men with

[1] Literally "A blessed meal time," a common salutation in Germany. The reply was that they had had no real meal.

steaming pail in one hand, and spoon in the other, while wife or child sat near by, often sharing the meal, for the City Ordinary is accessible, of course, only to those whose work lies in its immediate neighbourhood. I declare explicitly that a daily dinner of this sort is a disgrace. It is a disgrace to the honest men who are forced to it, a disgrace to our age, which makes a boast of its humanitarian sentiments, a disgrace to the men in whose hands rest to-day the weal and the woe of all our factory workers. How can a meal in the public street ever be a "blessed" one? How can we honestly be reproachful if it is begun without the folded hands of prayer? How must it destroy, far more than the words of agitators can, the family feeling of father and of mother, and the happiness and vitality of the family itself? For such a condition of things with its consequences affects not only the solitary individual sitting on the public bench and eating his scanty meal, but the whole domestic relation. One of its consequences is that often there can be no regular dinner at home for mother and children. A single striking example will be enough. I sat, one day, on the brink of a large and pretty lake in the Chemnitz Promenade, on a bench beside a man who had been paving the sidewalk a quarter of an hour before. It had taken him seven minutes to reach this spot, where he now awaited his son who had been told to fetch his dinner here. Quarter-past twelve o'clock, half-past twelve o'clock came; still the lad did not appear. We then set out to meet him on the way, and at last, just as three quarters of the hour had elapsed, he came running breathless, and afraid of his angry father. His school, which usually closed promptly at twelve o'clock, had been kept twenty minutes later; and then the poor child had run at the top of his speed all the way home and back again to us. In five minutes more his father had swallowed his dinner and hurried back to work, while the little boy, tired, hungry, and exhausted, trudged back home to eat alone the remnant of dinner left behind by mother, brothers and sisters and boarders. This may be a singular and particularly unfortunate case, but the fact remains that children, tired and hungry from sitting in school from eight o'clock till noon, must then, without

eating a morsel themselves, carry their father's dinners; this occurs daily, and not in single instances but in hundreds of cases.

But to come back to our own works. Some of the men who managed to satisfy themselves with a cold luncheon at noon always had a hot supper at home in the evening. Frequently the whole family postponed dinner to this hour in order to eat together. This was not so bad, at least, when the family consisted of adults or older children. But when there were young children, one evil merely took the place of another, for to eat the principal meal of the day in the evening is acknowledged to be neither good nor healthful for children.

With most of my mates, supper consisted of potatoes or bread, with either butter, dripping, or oil, and some small relish. In quantity or quality, the food always corresponded to the size of the income, the thrift and the varying current expenses of the family. Coffee was never wanting, and this the lodgers had without extra payment, but it was understood that they should buy their own bread and butter.

This is all of any importance that I have to say concerning the housing, clothing, and food, of my fellow-workmen. I think that even this imperfect sketch proves the correctness of what I have said as to the necessary narrowness and restrictions of their condition in life. But it also demonstrates another fact, infinitely more significant and ominous, and which, in daily intercourse with this class, is continually forced on the attention; namely, that in consequence of these conditions, throughout wide circles of the industrial population of our great cities, the traditional form of the family no longer exists. The old organism, based on the consanguinity of parents and children, and built up exclusively of the kinship—with the sole exception in the higher classes of more or less closely associated servants—has given place to-day, in the ranks of the working men, to groups of people, kindred and stranger, formed upon purely economic needs of a common lodging and living, and formed, moreover, by chance.

Inclinations of relationship have plainly given way to economic

obligations. The mother has evolved into the household executive, who receives from husband, grown children, and stranger inmate alike, a fixed sum with which she contracts to meet the demands of food, rent, laundry-work, and the like; as to clothing, each relies upon himself. It is not the social democrats with their agitation who are responsible for this. Precisely these conditions are the result of our whole industrial system, which makes it impossible for working men and their families to share their meals in common, which compels them to occupy the most ill-arranged and crowded dwellings, and to admit utter strangers, often in rapid succession, to the most intimate family relations, such as used to be held sacred for the family itself. Let one but remember the dense packing of the "rooms," that is to say, the family dwelling-places, in such working men's barracks, or the old country houses altered to their plan; the impossibility of isolating one from the other; the thinness of the walls in houses so hastily constructed that they permit every loudly spoken word to be distinctly heard by the neighbours; the single corridor for the three or four "rooms" on every storey, whose use, as well as that of the water supply, closets, etc., must be in common. All this leads to a promiscuity of daily intercourse, a publicity of family life which is appalling to the beholder, and which must inevitably bring about the destruction of domesticity itself. It is absolutely impossible that the children of such families should not live like brothers and sisters of one blood, when the corridor is their place of common resort, their play-ground, their opportunity for confidences; that growing lads and girls should not come into the closest contact with each other; that the men shall not find continual occasion for interchange of ideas, and often of blows; that the women shall not intimately know every nook and corner, every shortcoming, every article of clothing and of household use, among their neighbours; nay, more, that the common use of such articles, as for example the borrowing and lending of cooking utensils, shall not introduce a distinctly communistic character into the housekeeping of the scantily equipped families. Add to this the confinement and narrowness of the individual

quarters, which drive the men out of doors in the evening into the streets and fields when it is possible, or into some neighbour's larger and better room, or the beer saloons, and assembly halls. Let one remember, further, how much this congestion is aggravated by the presence of lodgers and strangers, who bring with them their own customs and usages, their different manners, standards, and requirements, which, strange and often enough offensive, they yet express and put in practice as freely as in their own homes. Let one remember that these strangers leave the house with the husband and grown-up children, and return with them, and habitually sit around the same table with them until bed-time, reading, smoking, talking, or card-playing. It is a fact that in many families parents and children can be together, undisturbed, *only* during the night in the hours of sleep. Even the last chance of a cosy hour together at breakfast or dinner is constantly destroyed by the conditions of labour which I have described, and which make it impossible for father and children to go home for their meals. And even when this can be done, the hour's recess is only just sufficient, in my opinion, to make the double journey—in the nature of things a moderately long one for the workmen of large establishments—and to swallow the food post-haste, without comfort or leisure.

I shall speak in another place of the effect of this state of things on the morals, characters and opinions of the wage-earning class. Here I have only to state the bare fact of the complete change in character of the workman's family, and the causes which have brought it about. I repeat that it is, primarily, a product of our present economic conditions. These it is which must bear the heaviest burden of responsibility, and not social democracy, which in this respect as in others has but drawn the ultimate conclusions from existing premises and formulated them into a system. The present evils are the groundwork and opportunity of social democracy and its doctrine of the ideal future family. We must not be blind to this fact, above all, those of us who represent the avowedly religious section of the community, and instead of bewailing the obvious decline of the old Christian

ideal of the family and inveighing against social democracy, we ought rather to co-operate in putting an end, definitely and forever, to the economic causes of which the present situation is the inevitable result.

CHAPTER III.

WORK IN THE FACTORY.

THE former proprietor of our factory, who was still living, had developed it from a small enterprise to an important establishment, but he had recently changed its form to a joint-stock company in which he held a large number of shares. At the time I worked there one technical and one business manager were associated in the direction. The works were, as I have said, in one of the larger suburbs of Chemnitz. Two huge parallel buildings formed the bulk of the establishment. Past one end rushed the railway trains, after which we often sent longing glances; at the other end lay the high road. From this point the factory looked almost gay. A well-tilled fruit garden, a broad, clean entrance and a pretty lodge with its little rose garden beside it hid from view the black dust that inevitably lies thick upon every building and enclosure of such iron works as ours.

Our yard, which extended to the railway, was large and spacious. A small gasometer stood in it not far from the porter's lodge; there was also a large building with rooms for the drivers and watchmen, the dining-hall and canteen, the boiler-room of one of our two steam-engines, the stable, and finally a shed filled with rusty machinery which had been valuable but was now antiquated in its construction, with dust-covered specimens of the iron coffins formerly made in our shops, with old iron piled up for sale, and with all kinds of rubbish besides. Farther on was a carpenter's shop with huge piles of lumber in the open air, a storage for boxes, and great heaps of coal. Close beside the stout, old-fashioned wooden palings which separated the railway embankment from the yard, stood a powerful crane for the loading

of goods ready for shipment, a switch connecting it with the railway. Over everything lay a thick coating of coal and iron dust. There was little enough to please the eye; here and there a sickly tree or starveling patch of grass in the midst of heaps of castings, yet in a quiet corner there was a modest little garden which the driver had made for himself, where he raised a few vegetables. Here bloomed some flowers also, and here was the fragrance of mint and smart-weed; many a time have we workmen secretly plucked a leaf of them.

The building which formed the boundary of the court-yard on its further side was the original factory; it was therefore the older and more primitive one, with low ceilings, small windows and dark work-rooms, which on the ground floor were usually paved with badly worn tiles. The counting-room was in this building, as also the offices of the engineers and draughtsmen.

Between these two principal buildings there stood a smaller one, which contained the forges and the warerooms.

I was employed in the second shop. It had been more recently built, and was in consequence better, lighter, airier and more comfortably planned. It was about as high as a three-storeyed house. It always reminded me of the interior of a church. It was not divided into floors, and one could stand in the middle and look up to the roof, which was nearly all glass, in order to give more light. Along each side of the building ran two long galleries, one above the other, with steep, wide, wooden stairs leading to them, which with our heavy loads it was no easy matter to climb. In one of these galleries was the testing-room, where the new-made machinery was tested, and entrance to which, except on business, was positively forbidden, on account of the great danger of accidents. In another part were the turning-rooms. The rest of the gallery was, for the moment, unoccupied, for the branch of our machine production, there located, was languishing. At the east end of the building there was only one small corridor, and thus was left a spacious, light and pleasant place below, like the chancel of a church. The space usually occupied in our churches by the sacristy was here filled by the

engine-room with its groaning iron monster, whose giant strength pervaded all the room, and started into life and activity dozens of powerful machines and hundreds of men. Close by rose the enormous chimney, pointing with blackened and smoking top to heaven. Ringing bells and pealing organs were indeed wanting, but in their stead mighty tones unceasingly resounded, hammering and filing of mechanics, groan and thud of machinery, creak and rattle of wheels. And the work which the grimy, blue-bloused men were doing—was it not also the work of God and His service? At least, might it not be so?

But there was not much free space in the large and lofty room. All along the sides, before the windows, stood the vices of the vice-hands; machines, large and small, were fixed to the pillars of the gallery and wherever else there was a spot with even tolerable light to be found. The largest, an enormous drilling-machine, lay transversely across the whole room, making locomotion, and still more transportation inconvenient and difficult. Iron castings just ready for working or already wrought, lay about the various work-benches on the tiled and uneven floor; half or wholly completed machines of all sizes stood near the vice-hands' places. Here assorted pieces regularly arranged, there boards and long iron shafts leaned against the walls. In one corner was the bellows, and beside it the packers had an allotted space, while at the opposite end, taking up a vast deal of room and greatly impeding locomotion, were ranged the assorted parts of steam-engines, recently constructed, and awaiting sale. A powerful crane in constant use, operated with difficulty by two men by means of a windlass, stretched across the whole space, while two small ones served the men at work in that part of the building which I compared above to the choir of a church. Close under the galleries the long shafts rotated rapidly, supplying perpetual motion to the various machines by means of their belts and pulleys. In the first days of my factory life I made my way about only with difficulty and insecurity; everything in the place stood or moved, I thought, without method or plan. But little by little the eye discerned the order

that reigned even here, the foot found out the narrow ways between the machines that led from one to another throughout all the room, and that, cramped and winding as they were, made the transport of large and unwieldy articles particularly difficult. Only the pleasant, lighter end of the room which I have described was in this respect better.

Such was the place where from 120 to 150 men did their daily work; dingy, bare, desolate, without one single convenience, full of a never-ending, nerve-splitting confusion of discordant noises. And yet there was a certain nobility and poetry over it all; not only when the sun poured in floods of light glorifying the dirt and iron, but even when a grey sky made the bareness and bleakness barer and more bleak. It was the poetry of great concurrent forces in ceaseless but harmonious movement; it was the nobility of human toil which endured here day after day where more than a hundred men were struggling for bread, for life and for happiness.

In our building, as everywhere in the works, only men were employed; we had no women or girls or young children. To the best of my knowledge there were not, in the whole establishment, half a dozen boys between thirteen and fourteen, and only a scattering of apprentices from fourteen to seventeen years of age. This fact gave a very definite character to our manufactory and our employés, and, in especial, it prevented me from gathering any personal information about the labour of women and children.

Nevertheless the make-up of our corps of workmen was heterogeneous enough to reflect faithfully the character of our modern methods of great capitalistic production. The most varied trades were represented and carried on; old ones piously handed down from father to son since the time of the guilds, and new ones born of the great inventions and changed necessities of the day. I can enumerate more than a dozen handicrafts practised among us. The most numerously represented were, of course, the vice-hands; then followed in diminishing succession the lathe-workers, planers, joiners, workers at the drill-press, at the

slotting machine, blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, belt-makers, harness-makers and tin-smiths. Then came a series of men and mongrel occupations ; markers (Anreisser), furnishers (Aufreiber), couplers, polishers and wheel-cutters; then machine-tenders, firemen, packers, carriers, helpers of every kind and description, —for even among these was labour specialised—finally the driver and porter, forming together a varied chain, every link of which was necessary, however, to the completion of even the smallest machine. Here was a form of human community of labour, new, original and magnificent, whose like the past has never known; visible expression of the moral and economic revolution which is even now being realised on the earth, and concerning which our day must decide whether it shall be a blessing or a curse to humanity.

This body of workmen was organised, I need not say, in detail, the vice-hands at the head, whose large number was divided into gangs with from four to ten men in each. Each gang had its foreman, commonly called "monteur," who conducted the general work and directed and controlled the individuals. The workers at the planes and at the lathes, joiners, packers, had each their master-workmen, and over all was the master-mechanic, who was at the same time superintendent of the whole building where we belonged. He was the captain, as it were, of this company of wage-earners, 120 men strong, with the other master-workmen for his lieutenants and sergeants, while the monteurs, whose divisions were called "montagen," represented the corporals with their squads. The superintendent and the other foremen were responsible to the managers, and in particular to the technical managers. They directed the work done in their own especial gangs or divisions, while the master-mechanic, in touch with them, superintended the whole industrial process in detail.

This industrial process was complicated, difficult, and tedious, but it was not one of those whose monotony kills the minds and souls and bodies of men. The manufacture of machinery is one of the most highly developed branches of modern collective in-

dustry, and stands in the first rank also as to its moral influence upon the mass of workmen engaged in it. It is precisely this feature of it which I wish to prove and to illustrate in what follows.

The mechanical process begins in the pattern shop. A large machine, let us say a planer of the newest model, has been ordered. The designer's plans and estimates are finished, the draughtsman's work is completed. The next step is the making of the patterns of the various parts of the new machine; this went on, as I said, in the pattern shop. The aid of machine tools was, however, called in wherever it was possible, and for this purpose a circular saw, dangerous if used with the slightest carelessness, but ten times more rapid and exact than the human hand, and a planer stood ready for constant use. But they could be employed only on the coarser parts of the work, the rest, and by far the greatest part in this department was necessarily hand-labour. The patterns, big and little, were often of the strangest shapes, and each had to be made of a prescribed size, and with the utmost accuracy and solidity. Those who were employed here had to be not skilled workmen only, but men of intelligence as well. They had to comprehend to a certain extent the design of the machine, the patterns of which they were engaged upon, and to understand the designs which furnished the dimensions and forms of their work; they must be possessed of a certain knack and dexterity in putting the boards and pins together rapidly, and in using the smallest possible amount of material, and they must succeed in reproducing the form demanded by the working plans. The relation between foreman and men was not confined to mere disciplinary control; there existed between them, necessarily, a free interchange of opinion as to the best possible construction of the form prescribed. Thus a certain independence of action was assured to the individual workman, and what he produced was not a fragment, but a thing complete and excellent in itself, not to be thrown aside after its use in the foundry, but to become a permanent part of the factory's collection of patterns. Purely mechanical labour, harmful to mind and

character, was obviously impossible in this department. The room, too, in which these men—a moderate number—were at work was the best in the whole factory: large and high, with plenty of light and air. Dust there was, of course, in abundance, as there must always be in a pattern-maker's shop, where coarse and fine saws are continually in operation, and these pattern-makers, like all others, were pale-faced in consequence.

The completed patterns—usually painted red—were taken to the foundry close at hand, which then delivered to us the castings from them. When these were ready it was the task of our squad of hands to unload and to weigh them. Then they passed under the scrutiny of the pattern-master, who had charge of the collection of patterns. His trained eye distinguished at once the form and purpose of the different rough pieces, which often showed but a distant resemblance to the dainty pattern, and each piece received a particular number, which was registered in the factory books, to designate later the finished machine.

All the parts were then handed over to the erecter (monteur) entrusted with the construction of the machine in question. This assignment was made only after careful selection. The foremen did not receive the machines at haphazard; the work was allotted according to the length of service, experience, and skill of the erecter, as well as to the size of his squad. Younger and less experienced men with smaller and less trained groups were given the construction of the simpler and more familiar machines, although there were sometimes exceptions to this rule. The superintendent and foremen, as well as the directors, received from every finished machine a so-called percentage, which rose higher in proportion to the size and complexity of the machine. Here the foremen who stood well with the superintendent had obviously the advantage, since they could obtain the construction of such machines as yielded the larger percentage. However, nothing of this came under my personal observation; I have only heard it said among the men. The distribution was so regulated, besides, that certain ones among the foremen always worked on special

machines. One, for example, on planers and circular saws, another on drill-presses and lathes, and so forth.

It usually happened that two or more different sorts of machines were in course of construction in the same department, a circumstance immensely potent and favourable to the educational character of the men's work. By means of it the last possibility of a purely mechanical kind of work is done away with in this department also. To be sure the reason for this arrangement is not any such moral consideration, but is inherent in the character of the industry itself. It is a measure necessary to ensure the steady occupation of the vice-hands.

The erecter and his gang who have been appointed for the work can do but little with the rough parts handed over by the pattern-master. Before the vice-hand has given the finishing touches, and the heavy work of putting the machine together can begin, most of the pieces have gone through many hands.

Next they were taken to the platform of the marker (Anreisser), one of the most important and respected workmen in the factory, by reason both of his trade and his personality. His task was a most responsible one. He had to calculate exactly and to mark out with drawing-point and compass according to the complicated designs lying before him, every hole to be drilled, every surface to be planed, every edge and corner to be bevelled in each one of the various castings. Upon him it depended, above all others, whether the different parts corresponded and fitted together at the end, and whether the finished machine ran smoothly. Although long years of practice, a precise knowledge of many machines, a steady hand and trained eye make even this task comparatively easy and familiar, it is one, nevertheless, that can never be accomplished without the strictest attention and application of mind. It was often my duty, perhaps because I appeared to be the most intelligent of the hand-labourers, to assist the marker. I fetched and held for him the iron levels, T squares, and other appliances, and I always found him with his designs before him, silent in the midst of the deafening noise, at his work of calculating and testing. There is in most circles so little opportunity of obtaining a correct

idea of the character of factory work, and people are so readily inclined to regard it as the lowest and simplest and therefore the cheapest form of human activity, that I hold it my duty here to enter a protest against such hasty judgment, and to call attention to the work of this man, which in my opinion demands much greater mental and physical vigour than that of many minor government officials, clerks, book-keepers and the like. Yet he and the other workmen of his class are much more poorly paid; and they occupy an entirely different social position from that of any of those I have just named. I do not hesitate to declare that the over-estimation and emphasis, one-sided and false and ludicrous as it often is, which the social democrats lay on manual labour, seems to have a well-grounded reason in the prevalent misconception and contempt of this and similar factory work. It is the struggle for a juster moral appreciation of these callings, and consequently for their social recognition by the community, which here and throughout the whole modern labour agitation finds its expression in elementary and incongruous forms.

The single pieces were taken from the markers to the workers of the drill-press and planers or the level-cutters and lathe-drivers, according to the assignments of the foremen. In the two first-named operations we find the opposite poles of factory-work. In a monotony rarely broken the workers at the drill-press and planers stood beside their machines, large or small, boring hole after hole, planing surface after surface. They watched the steel blade interminably ploughing up and smoothing off the surface, or the auger digging into the casting as if in play. Over and over again they poured cold soapsuds on the heated places, brushed away the larger filings, and blew away the small. The only part of the work which demanded even a little thought and care was the preliminary arrangement of the piece to be bored or planed. The holes must be exactly perpendicular and the surfaces exactly horizontal, according to the instructions of the marker. To this end a strong and exact support for the casting had to be made with wooden braces, boards and plugs; hammer and spirit-level were used, and one or more unskilled workmen were called on for

assistance. But when this was finished, the driller and planer began for the millionth time a task at which the human eye can do no more than look on and oversee. Strange to say, the wage varied among the men doing this work; some earning a large, others a small amount. One of the planers who worked on the largest surfaces, and a driller who had to use the largest machine in boring the deepest and largest holes in castings weighing often many hundredweights, both of them on piece-work, received, according to the unanimous assertion of many of their mates, the highest wage paid in our building; they received not less than one hundred and sixty or seventy marks monthly, while, the vice-hands and blacksmiths were paid much less for their more exhausting work. It is easier to understand this in the case of the man working at the "large drill-press" than in that of the planer, who, after the castings had been lifted by the helps of ordinary labourers upon the faultless surface of his machine, needed only to arrange and fasten them and then to let steam do its work, which took, often, half the day. On the whole the planers' work was easier but more tedious than the drillers', and again, among the latter they had easier and more tedious work who ran the larger machines than they whose attention was ceaselessly fixed on the ever-revolving steel of the smaller ones, on which only little and shallow perforations were to be made, thin surfaces and narrow castings to be handled. To make such pieces fast on the machine was out of the question; the workman's hand must grasp them firmly, his eye must be keen and quick, and his lungs must continually inhale the fine dust of the iron. Yet these were the very drillers whose wages were the lowest, if I was rightly told, and who were certainly the youngest among them.

The work of the men at the slotting machines and at the lathes was of another sort. Both these occupations, however much they differ in detail, are alike in this: that they make possible for the man who tends the lathe or the slotting machine a far greater degree of independent and spontaneous activity. The worker at the slotting machine, who pushes his way sometimes in a straight line, sometimes in curves or circles upon the surface or edge of

the already smoothed and polished casting, must follow exactly the line prescribed, and he is compelled, as soon as he sets his machine in motion, to watch and to direct its course, bending over it with the most unflagging attention. The same thing is true of the man at the lathe, whose task it is to shape and shorten bolts, shafts, axles and levers, and to fit them to nuts, notches, incisions and points, so that they shall be immediately ready for the new machines, needing but a little retouching from the file of the man at the vice. But there is one great drawback to these forms of labour, shared also by the drillers and planers; everything they do is piecemeal. Men working at the drill-press, at the planes, at the slotting machine, and at the lathe, never produce anything immediately ready for sale, to say nothing of a completely mounted machine. Neither when it comes to their hands, nor when it leaves them, is their work an organic whole; it is always a payment. This feature of labour is not to be lightly regarded, and its evil results, as we shall see, are only partially counteracted. I must come back again to the fact which forced itself continually upon me, that it was precisely in these trades that those traits appear which are wrongly said to be characteristic of the modern German working man in general; mental superficiality and moral immaturity.

The work of the broachers (Aufreiber), however, always seemed to me the most pitiable. They were two elderly men who, day after day, from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock at night, had nothing to do but to polish by hand the rough machine-drilled holes till they were true and smooth, an eternal and monotonous drudgery. How is it possible that there can be, in such toil, any joy of work, any inner satisfaction, any mental stimulus or moral development?

The work of the vice-hands was of a directly opposite character. When all the various parts had been drilled, planed, bevelled, cut, and turned according to the plan; when screws, nuts, bolts, and joints had been annealed and hardened; when the wrought-iron and brass work was ready, their work began—the actual construction of the machine. Under the direction of the erecter, with the

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draught before his eyes, and chisel, file, and hammer in hand, one piece was fitted into another, often not without the greatest difficulty. It was very rarely that the parts fitted exactly at once; it was almost impossible in passing through so many hands that they should have been made with the delicacy and accuracy which alone would have brought about that result. There was always much to be done over; many a test had to be made, many a time the whole machine must be taken apart and set up again. The plain surfaces only roughly planed at first, which were to run one on the other, had to be polished with glass dust, oil, and iron dust, until they fitted closely and ran smoothly: a difficult task, usually given to us hand-workers. There were also roughnesses to be smoothed away, great discs to be riveted to iron shafts, bolts and other things to be inserted, holes that could not be bored with the machine to be made with a hand-auger. All this had often to be done in the most impossible positions—high up on ladders, bent over, kneeling, squatting, lying on the back or the belly. Now and then when it would not go at all, this or that mechanic, a worker at the drill, at a lathe, or a slotting machine, would be summoned and informed, not very gently, of the fatal state of affairs for which he was responsible, and one or another part given back to him for alteration. But little by little it was adjusted, and we could see the machine grow, until finally the last screw was tightened and it stood perfect and complete before our eyes. Then followed on the spot, if possible, the first crude attempts to set the new machine in motion, and its transport, again by us hand-workers, to the trial-room.

Here also vice-hands and their erecters were stationed, and a new form of work began. The new machine would not work at once; it was tested many times, its running carefully observed, the slightest hitch taken into account, and its cause removed; it was retouched here and there, until at last a perfect working of it was obtained. Then came the final grand trial in the presence of manager and superintendent, together with the erecter who had been charged with its construction, and it was handed over to the painters, who gave the monster its attractive glittering dress

of lacquer, and from whom the packers, last of the series, took it.

Although this work of the vice-hands was much more difficult and long protracted, yet, ethically considered, it must rank much higher than that of the machine-tenders. In the one, action is a mechanical imitation; in the other, it is free intelligence. In the one it is always partial and fragmentary, in the other it is an organic, progressive development whose product is at last a rounded whole. Of course there is in the first case many a weary task, many a tedious hour of filing, chiselling, and drilling to be gone through with, but such work is the exception, and, at all events, it is in furtherance of the more essential labour, and shows a real advance when it is done. It was a real satisfaction and delight when at last, after long and wearisome testing, the machine stood completed, the shafts running easily in their bearings, levers working smoothly, and surfaces fitting close. How often have I observed such pleasure in vice-hands, old and young, although, if taxed with it, they would not always confess to it. The fact that the same gang had several machines in process of making at the same time, in different stages of construction, was, as I have said, an added cause of interest. For when a man, according to the different stages of preparation, was called on to work a couple of days on one machine, or an hour or two on another, and perhaps to spend a whole afternoon on a third, he was compelled to take double and threefold care to keep his mind from wandering, in order not to confuse the respective pieces of his work, and thus he was led to compare one machine with another. And to do this is so beneficial and important that the principle of division of labour which naturally has to prevail within the squad, and which is so injurious elsewhere, here loses almost wholly its bad effect on the individual workman. It appears from all this that the modern industrial system of production was not only not harmful to the ethical character of the work of vice-hands and pattern-makers, but even indicated a solid advance in that direction, for it raised both these trades from the narrow handicrafts of the period of small industries into a wider field, and related

them closely to the true arts of metal-working and cabinet-making.

The same system of production has had precisely opposite effects upon some other equally old and honourable callings. Such trades as those of the painter, saddler, blacksmith, tinsmith and carpenter were degraded in our factory into merely auxiliary processes. In other factories it may be the same with other trades ; perhaps even with the vice-hands and pattern-makers, for it will always depend on the kind of manufacture engaged in. But at all events what I have said of the moral value of the work of the man at the slotting machine, at the drill-press, at the lathe, and at the planers, holds good, in my opinion, for all of these kinds of work. For all of them there was, broadly speaking, nothing in our factory but tedious and unsatisfactory patch and piece-work. With us the painters had only to paint the machines the same grey-green factory colour ; the blacksmiths only to supply the simplest wrought-iron forms ; the tinsmiths to make repairs ; the saddlers to piece out belts of the required lengths, while our three carpenters were at the sole disposal of the packers' foreman, for whom they had nothing to do but to nail together boxes and frames for the shipping of the machines which had been ordered.

Broadly speaking, however, the evil results of subdivision of labour among our workers in all the categories were greatly lessened by the collective character of our industry, and by the same means the quality of their efficiency was ethically heightened. Our work was based on the principle of the co-operation of all in each and every article produced. From superintendent and foreman down to packer and porter everyone was working together for the same end, the same definite result, the construction, namely, of the highly complicated work of art known as a machine. In consequence, the sense of mutual responsibility and absolute interdependence was strong among us, and a lively interest in the result was felt by even the unskilled workmen. Each special department was necessary to the general process of construction, and every individual task depended on the prompt, accurate and

intelligent work of other men. It was perfectly well understood, for example, how important it was to the vice-hand that the worker at the drill-press should follow the plan exactly; it was easy to see how much trouble it cost to make a thing good and usable again which had once been damaged, and everyone dreaded the first complaints and fault-finding of his mates, who always brought the misdoer sharply to a sense of his responsibility. Hence in cases of doubt they preferred to find out the purpose and application of the portion under their hands, and performed even the most tedious piecemeal work with thoughtful and intelligent regard to the final make-up of the whole machine. And so it came about that, as almost every man of the hundred and twenty had his share and credit in the success of almost every machine that left the works, so every one, even the humblest helper, who had moved the portions and the completed whole fifteen or twenty times, tried to make the general design and construction more or less clear to himself, and every one, when the great work was at last in order and running for the first time approached it with critical eye and inward satisfaction, seeking out the parts which his own plane had smoothed, his own auger pierced, his own chisel chipped, his own hand wearisomely polished. True, most of the men were unconscious of the salutary influence of this community of labour, but to my eyes it was always most patent whenever chance, curiosity or business took me into the rooms of the embroidery-machine department. There, the reverse of our conditions obtained, and the activity of many of the workers was inorganic and mechanical, making no demands on the brain-power, so that their industry could not afford the counterbalancing advantages of our own. Theirs was a form of human toil which might rightly be said to be devoid of every moral and educational stimulus which the biblical idea of work includes, in which the workman, however he might wish for it, had not the smallest opportunity to show energy, vigilance or assiduity, or to apply previous knowledge or invention to his task; but where, without use of will or mind, or even strength, his sole duty was to let the same steel blade cut into the same place with the same

motion and the same rate of speed, or to count mesh after mesh for eleven hours, day after day, work which for an active man with the possibility of growth in him is, in fact, no work of God's service, but a torment of hell. It must be said that even in this department of our works this kind of labour was not so common as we know it to be in other industries, yet it was frequent and well-defined enough to stamp the contrast between the character of this part of the establishment and our own, where in spite of all weak points and disadvantages, the industrial process did not isolate the individual outwardly and inwardly, but placed him in an active community of labour which raised him up and carried him along with it, and made even the tedious piecemeal work more endurable.

But neither this system with all its advantages, nor indeed any other form of collective industry in our modern organisation, can protect the wage-earner from one great moral evil, namely, a certain lack of independence of character which always appears wherever the workman is not in a position to dispose freely of his own product in the market. He lacks what the mere master-mechanic still has or at least has had until very lately, personal accountability for the value and sale of his product. A factory-hand, even such as ours, does the work assigned him, but from the moment when he hands it over to his foreman or manager, he has no further claim upon it nor any voice in disposing of it. It no longer exists for him, as he himself no longer exists for the market where his product is sold. Every workman in a factory, however experienced, however skilful he may be, finds himself at once and for ever upon the plane of the former apprentice. Here lies the cause of his perpetual state of tutelage and dependence upon his manager, who takes his product to market for him and assumes for him the risk of the transaction, but at the same time deprives his labour of one of its most important factors, by means of which even the poorest trade may become stimulating and interesting, and which is the chief agent in the development of a firm and well-rounded personality. Consciousness of an aim and purpose in life, concern for the outcome of his labour, joy in its

successful termination, eagerness to find the best way of disposing of it, are all wanting to the factory-hand. Yet it is exactly these things which mature, clarify and strengthen the will, the character, and the mental powers, and make a whole man. But in our day a servile dependence has taken the place of these; the workman is answerable not to himself but to a single superior, in whose favour is success and good fortune, against whose arbitrary power of direction and disposition the wage-earner's goodwill and skill count for little, and his right of free choice in deciding about his trade and his very existence for absolutely nothing at all. So it is natural that the working man should seek to occupy himself sometimes with childish trifles, sometimes with problems too deep and difficult for his comprehension, or that he should plunge into dissipation or into noisy politics. At all events, his present state is an abnormal one, and stamps his character with immaturity, which I have observed even among my own work-mates to threaten their moral conduct in life. Thus as was daily and unmistakably shown to me, capitalist production does away with precisely what at present makes the large majority of people defenders of individualism in the economic system, the responsibility, namely, of the individual mechanic, his manly independence amid the collectivity of industrial life, his possibility of assuming liability, his freedom of production and of shaping his own future, and with this, his noble ambition and strenuous endeavour.

And this fatal effect, necessarily rooted in collective industry, was still further enhanced by the labour regulations in force in our works. It is my next task to describe these. They were, be it said, in print, in a pamphlet of thirteen octavo pages, a copy of which was given to each new hand on his entering the factory, with the condition of returning it on leaving.

For the sake of completeness I will begin with the hours of labour, although I have alluded to them before. They were from six o'clock in the morning until mid-day, and from one o'clock until six o'clock in the afternoon. On Monday, or the first working day of each new week, work began an hour later in

the morning, a respite gratefully received by all, and affording a possibility of a few hours' sleep preparatory to beginning the week's work to many, especially the young people who amused themselves riotously all Sunday till twelve o'clock in the dance halls and often spent with their sweethearts the remainder of the night. One hour was struck off on Saturday afternoon also, work closing at five o'clock. There were no other interruptions, except the morning pause of twenty minutes at eight o'clock for breakfast, which I have already described; the afternoon recess had been done away with in order to dismiss the men at six o'clock. There were no deviations from this routine so long as I was connected with the factory. Several times, however, during that period the prospect of extra time was discussed among the hands when rumours of large orders penetrated from the counting-house to the factory. Such reports were never received or circulated with satisfaction, for in the event of their proving true, two sections of our regulations would come into force, binding every workman to the performance of such extra work at the usual rate of pay per hour and per piece, without opposition or remonstrance on his part. They ran as follows: "Changes of time will be announced by bulletin," and "every workman will be bound to continue work after the regular hour of closing, at the stipulated wage."

On the other hand, whether or not to work on holidays was left to the free choice of the workman. During my stay there were but few; the law prohibiting Sunday labour in Saxony had materially lessened the work on that day of the week. Accordingly the overtime and Sunday labour done during that summer was confined to the repairs absolutely necessary, and to the work of one half of the men on the Sunday and Monday when the yearly inventory was taken. This duty was required of the men, but only those who voluntarily applied for it were given the work of repairs. I met with only one instance where nominal free-will was actual compulsion. This was one Saturday evening when four of us were assigned to the chief engineer for an immediate and thorough overhauling of one of the large engines. I was

one of the four, and I had planned to go to an important social-democratic meeting on that very evening. However, as the engineer adroitly gave us to understand that the work would take only an hour or so I agreed to undertake it. As it soon became apparent that it would take three times as long, I worked for an hour and then asked to be dismissed, but it was only with the utmost difficulty that I obtained permission to quit. To fill my place the engineer summoned a worker at a drill-press who came by at the moment, one of seven volunteers who have the task of sweeping and clearing up the factory every Saturday. This man had not the smallest inclination to be my successor, but he remained, nevertheless. "What can you do?" he said. "You must keep on the right side of the superintendent!" What is more, the Sunday repairs already mentioned always took place, when they had become necessary, in the forenoon, during the hours of church service. The only men, however, who were obliged by the terms of their contract and the nature of their work to be on hand every Sunday morning without exception were the engineers, who could clean their machines only at the hours when they were not running.

We were paid partly by time and partly by the piece, and our rate of pay was determined on our entering the works, usually by the superintendent, but occasionally by the manager. Payment by time was the rule in our department. So far as I knew there was nothing, happily, of the ruinous system of group-payment, where for the construction of a machine or other article a fixed sum is assigned to a so-called piece-work foreman, who may be a man totally untrained for the especial task assigned to him and unskilled at it, but superficially clever and adaptable. The machine or article is constructed by the group of workmen whom the piece-work foreman supervises, and is paid for by a fixed sum of which he himself retains the lion's share; in plain terms the English sweating system in German dress. Yet there was no dislike to piece-payment among us, save on the part of some social-democratic zealots, and indeed such a dislike would have been, in our case, the purest folly. For the great

danger that lurks in piece-work, and which, my mates told me, visibly existed in one of the other large machine-shops of Chemnitz, the danger, namely, of straining the workmen to their very utmost during the whole long time occupied by work thus paid for, was nullified for us by the happily chosen rate of speed, neither too fast nor too slow, which prevailed throughout our establishment, and which contributed much toward making endurable even the dullest bit of patchwork. There was no time for loafing, yet each individual workman had so much freedom and scope that he could take some time out of one hour for any chance necessity and make it up in the next. This applied more to those who worked by the piece than to those in other wage-systems. I know that some of the highly-paid workers at the slotting machines ran their machines almost at their own convenience during the first half of the bi-weekly pay-period, and that they worked in real earnest only during the second half. These piece-workers were always objects of envy to their fellows on time-payment, and I was proudly told more than once about a worker at the drill-press who had succeeded in securing piece-wage just before my coming, to his own great satisfaction and pecuniary advantage. One of my friends, a skilled vice-hand, frequently complained to me of the tediousness of his time-wage, and heartily longed to be employed on piece-work, where, as he said, he would have more variety in his work, and a prospect of larger earnings.

I have said that wages were paid every two weeks. In the factory regulations the rule was thus formulated:—

"Wages shall be reckoned according to hours of work, or according to pieces of work accomplished, the price for which shall be agreed upon in advance by written contract (piece-work tickets or entries in the piece-work book).

"A wages-period shall extend from Saturday of one week to Friday of the second week thereafter, inclusive—unless another arrangement is found necessary.

"Wages shall be paid at twenty minutes after six o'clock on the Friday evening following the wages-period in question. Deductions from wages will

be made for the sick fund, and if necessary, for fines and breakages as well as for caution-money."

It appears from the last of these three paragraphs that the management retains from every employé the wages of his first week after entrance. Thus, if a man begins work on the Saturday following a pay-day he receives, at the end of his first fortnight, one week's wages, and only after that his regular fortnightly pay. This was not on account of any intention of sharp dealing on the part of the management, although it may have lessened the possibilities of strikes; I have already said that with us no previous notice, either of dismissal or of leaving was obligatory, and there was therefore no danger of breach of contract. Indeed, the management desired that its workmen, whatever might be the reason of their leaving the works, should have some money in hand, that they might seek for new employment in the following weeks with less anxiety, and without the pressure of immediate need. This was gratefully appreciated by all thoughtful workmen with whom I spoke in regard to it, although it was often a hard matter of pinching in the first week to get on without the sum demanded by this system of compulsory saving. But, in case of need, assistance was always given by the superintendent, who advanced a portion of the wage and deducted it gradually on later pay-days. I often had opportunity of observing this, and in the first days of my factory life I was myself freely urged by many fellow-workmen, well inclined toward me as a novice, and suspecting me to be in the usual straitened condition of new-comers, to ask for such an advance from the superintendent. For such cases there were actually existing provisions for advance payments—properly somewhat strict—as follows:—

"Advance payments shall be made only as an exception, and at the free discretion of the management."

And again, in regard to piece-work requiring much time, we have:—

"Payment of piece-work shall be made upon the completion of the work in

question, and its certified entry in the piece-book by the superintendent in charge, or upon the surrender of piece-tickets.

"Corresponding advances of piece-work wages may be made upon proper application; that is, before the close of the wages-period.

"Piece-work not completed and entered within two months from the date of contract will not be paid for unless an extension of the contract shall be expressly approved by the management before the expiration of the time."

On the Monday of the Chemnitz Annual Fair, which was a holiday, it was the universal custom, publicly announced, that everyone on application should receive an advance of money not exceeding ten marks. Formerly this was a very sensible arrangement, but it is now quite superfluous since the Annual Fair has outlived its importance, and wares as good or better can be bought quite as cheaply in the city shops. A great many working men knew this perfectly well, and frankly confessed it, yet the large majority continued to receive their ten marks' advance, only to feel so much the more bitterly their subsequent abatement on the next pay-day. I must own that this small trait does not throw a very favourable light on the economic capacity of our people.

The fortnightly payment was for all a joyful and eagerly awaited hour. Through the preceding afternoon work perceptibly slackened, and the moment the clock struck six our entire building was emptied in one instant, and in another the whole troop of workmen was in the building opposite, where in two of its rooms the important business was carried on. A foreman called out the names in alphabetical order. Upon the labourer's "here," another foreman handed to him a tin box containing the statement of his wages, and their amount in a round sum. One glance, and the correctness of the calculation was proved, one turn of the hand and the emptied box was tossed into a basket standing ready. We never received the fraction of a mark; for example, if anyone had earned twenty-nine marks and ninety-seven pfennigs, he received exactly the twenty-nine marks, and the pfennigs remaining were placed to his credit and carried over to

the next wages-account. The workmen were well content with this arrangement.

The whole scene was always particularly attractive to me, and was, indeed, a striking picture. About the two foremen stood a dense half circle of grimy figures in workmen's blouses and caps; in one hand the bright dinner pail. Old and young they were crowded together, some laughing and joking, some standing stolid and silent, some with brows bent darkly on the foreman who called the roll, waiting till they could answer "here," stretch out their hand and receive their hard-earned wage. In the background were the huge machines, mute and motionless as though they slept after the day's long toil, while here and there among them one of the men could be seen pausing to examine again the contents of his box, well pleased or with an air of disappointment. And over all shone the red of the setting sun, whose last shimmering rays penetrate the blind panes of the high factory windows.

Penalties, which were almost exclusively fines, were numerous in our factory regulations, and yet—I can say it in all truthfulness—they were generally imposed with a just and practical appreciation of the conditions. The largest fine was two marks; the smallest, twenty pfennigs. The former was imposed when a workman was detected smoking or drinking liquor in the factory, or for misuse of the electric signal-bells; the latter for tardiness in beginning work. The heavy penalties on liquor-drinking, and misuse of the electric bells, which might in both cases be extended to immediate dismissal, were entirely justifiable, and their very severity was the reason why they so seldom had to be imposed. In fact there was hardly any liquor drunk in the factory or during working hours. The only exceptions were a few notorious drunkards, and two or three faithful old fellows who brought with them in the morning their so-called "Püllchen," a little flask holding at most three or four small glasses, which they drank in the course of the six-hour morning as a refreshment and a luxury, and which was a perfectly harmless and trivial violation of the rule. The commonest fine was that for tardiness. At the stroke of six in the morning and one in the afternoon, the porter

who had charge of the workmen's entrance and exit, closed the gate so promptly that it often slammed in the very faces of hurrying men. Thus it happened that sometimes ten or twenty men were shut out at once, for with the long distance that some of the men had to travel, a delay of one or two minutes was easily possible. Tardiness of more than ten minutes was punished by a fine of fifty pfennigs; but this was altogether too high, for it was more than the earnings of an hour, indeed for many of us, including myself, it was the earnings of two hours and a half. In such cases, which were not, to be sure, very frequent, the men preferred to make their appearance two whole hours late, and then excuse themselves personally to the superintendent; the fine was then remitted and only the amount for the time missed deducted from their wages. A correspondingly heavy fine of fifty pfennigs was imposed for loafing during work or for unnecessarily quitting one's place of work; this was a rule needful in itself, but the fine was imposed only in very rare instances, although it was a rule frequently violated. The foremen were wise enough to take no notice. I knew of only one case, in which I was myself concerned, where this fine was imposed. On that occasion the manager himself discovered us engaged in a very exciting conversation, and we had all to pay our fifty pfennigs. I must say that I did not consider this action of the manager entirely just, for it affected workmen who had been for more than a dozen years in the factory without giving a single cause for complaint. Past good behaviour ought to command some consideration and forbearance, instead of the indiscriminate severity of martial law exercised by the authorities. There were also fines for negligence in work, for tardy entrances on the piece-work day-book, for improper use or wilful injury of machines and tools, and for soiling valuable drawings But I have never known that any of these penalties had to be enforced.

Only one thing roused the indignation of the workmen; this was the use which it was alleged was made of the money collected from fines. It was declared in the factory regulations, "that in so far as this money is not claimed by the factory as compensa-

tion for damages, the management retains the sole right of its disposal." No workmen with whom I spoke of it would admit that he knew what became of this money. But it was believed that the gratuities which had been paid to a few dozen workmen for extra work performed during the previous Christmas holidays, and which had been the source of great jubilation among them, had been paid out of this money; in other words, that the management had made itself popular and beloved by a number of people without the least sacrifice on its own part, but simply at the cost of the workmen who had been fined during the year. This was the universal belief which was secretly circulated and which made a great deal of ill-feeling.[1]

The observations regarding change of employment which I made during my stay in the factory must be taken as relative; and can only be justly appreciated from the standpoint of the general economic condition of the time. As I have said, this condition was mainly the effect of two all-reaching factors: the

[1] One of the factory managers gives me the following additional information in regard to this matter:—

"It is known to the labourers that the money paid as fines flows exclusively into the Aid Fund, concerning which they may find information in our Reports. In case of births, deaths, and sickness, the labourers receive from this fund one or more donations of from 10s. ($2·40) to 30s ($7·20), when they require them.

"In addition, monthly pensions of from 20s. ($4·80) to 30s. ($7·20) are paid from it to those who are no longer capable of work.

"The gratuities which were paid at that time to officers and labourers who had worked during the Christmas holidays did not come, of course, from the Aid Fund, but were reckoned as wages.

"Further be it observed that there is in addition another charitable gift of the president invested in stocks of the company, from the proceeds of which the factory's employés or their dependants, in some cases also former labourers, receive aid in case of necessity. Every workman is entitled to a claim upon it, and can ask for additional amounts; the amounts so received are deducted yearly, and are published as bulletins in the factory.

"The coal likewise, which forty or fifty needy people receive at Christmas, is paid for by their factory."

The labourers never spoke of all this. Hence I could not mention it above; but it is a pleasure to be able to add it here.—THE AUTHOR.

first of May celebration in the past, and the M'Kinley Bill in the future. The latter rose like a threatening spectre before the industries of Chemnitz, and already exerted a depressing influence on production; the former had been a complete failure in Chemnitz, to be sure, so much so that, according to the newspaper accounts, only four men out of the whole city had struck work. But to the celebration was due the formation of a powerful union of all the iron trades in the place which repressed, of course, every hostile movement after the fiasco. In this state of affairs no considerable increase of labour force was possible, whereas it was found easy to dismiss undesirable individuals. Matters were much less hard for machinists than, for example, weavers. In our works, there had been no extensive discharge of the men, while among the weavers the number of the unemployed was constantly on the increase. Afterwards, when I went into Vogtland, I met a Chemnitz spinner, a good steady fellow, and the father of a family, who had met with the disaster of loss of employment, and who in a single day had tramped the tremendous distance from Chemnitz to Crimmitschau, *via* Zwickau, looking for work, and on the day following was on the way back, weary and discouraged. He showed me his certificate of dismissal, on which was a note—"Worked as usual on May 1." He told me, without a trace of passion, that eleven hundred married men in Chemnitz were out of work. The number was greatly exaggerated, but it is indicative of the temper of the labouring population, and the rumours which from time to time prevail among them.

Under all the circumstances there was but a very small change in the personnel of our factory during my knowledge of it. From memory and from notes taken on the spot, I can only count sixteen changes which were made in the building to which I was assigned, although there may have been others. Speaking in detail, there were nine places vacated and immediately filled; two were filled after having been left vacant for some time, for some reason unknown to me—probably lack of business—three places were filled by several men, one after another, each leaving within a few days of his engagement, and finally, two places were vacated

just as I myself was leaving. I have not included in the above those places which remained vacant during my entire stay. In this period four men were kept from work for a considerable time by sickness or accident, or domestic complications, and their places remained unfilled, their mates attending to their necessary work. As soon as they reported for duty they went back to their old positions. Of those changing employment one was a hand-worker, two were lathe-hands, the rest were vice-hands. More than half were married.

More interesting than these dry statistics is a study of the causes which led the workmen to leave the factory. A few young vice-hands, single men, went away simply for the sake of change; this was the motive which had doomed some of my acquaintances at the inn to a long and finally a bitter term of idleness. Two others left because they had better positions in view, on which they immediately entered. In the case of one of these, a disagreeable occurrence in the works was the immediate cause of leaving. *I was not an eye-witness of this scene, and can only give it on the testimony of my fellow-workmen. I do not know if this entirely agrees with the facts*, but, at all events, it shows how keenly the men all sided with their mate, who was an out-spoken social democrat, and how deep was the ill-feeling occasioned. The workman in question was a lathe-hand who had tended the same machine in our factory for twenty-two years. One pay-day (he worked by the piece) he received a sum really surprisingly small. He complained of this, roughly enough, to his foreman, a man of very gentlemanly address, of whom I heard no other complaint. Abusive words passed between them, continuing even in the counting-house with the director; thereupon the workman gave notice of leaving. When he asked for his certificate of dismissal, he received, according to the statement of his nephew—a modest young fellow of twenty, of my own section, one written in red ink. More violent language followed, brought to an end only by the departure of the workman when they called in the police. The man left his certificate lying on the office table, and without it, being well known as a

capital workman, got a paying place in another machine-shop on the very next day. The impression which this event made on the rest of the hands is of great significance. There was no loud or violent discussion of it, to be sure, but so much the more was it quietly talked over between individuals ; the adherents of social democracy looked very gloomy, others merely shrugged their shoulders ; to some it was a welcome opportunity for satisfying their love of gossip ; to all it was a fresh warning to be prudent.[1]

Another vice-hand left the factory one week and returned the next. He had quarrelled with the erecter, thrown down his tools in a fit of rage, and left. As he wanted to remain in Chemnitz (I do not know his reasons ; he was from South Germany, and unmarried) and could not find work elsewhere in the city, he came back to us after a few days, and humbly asked the superintendent to give him his old place. The superintendent let him

[1] The factory's manager gives the following representation of the occurrence in contradiction to this description of my fellow-workmen :—

"The lathe-hand of whom you write had been assigned another task. But he wanted this former job (which belonged to another department), and, by doing less and earning less, sought to exercise a pressure on the superintendent. But the latter did not fall in with this, because he had counter evidence of other lathe-hands who did the same work. Statement was now made by the lathe-hand, which was to the intent that he demanded his release ; the superintendent gave it to him. I entirely approved of this, for the lathe-hand was one of the worst revolutionists, and would have been dismissed before but for consideration of his long service. The dispute which occurred in the office, and of which I was a witness, was caused by the man's demanding a certificate instead of the usual plain notice of release. Since he had belonged to the factory for more than ten years, I promised him the certificate, but gave him notice that his account would be confirmed according to the truth. The man was not satisfied with this, and I consequently directed him to go to the chief officer of the district for further negotiation. Thereupon he went away, but came back again in a somewhat drunken condition, and began to create a disturbance at the gate, so that, finally, I had to have him removed by the police. In consideration of his long employment, I took no notice of his breach of the peace.

"He had his simple notice of release taken to him on the next day, for without it he could not have obtained work elsewhere, but this notice was not written in red ink."—THE AUTHOR.

have a day or two of uncertainty, and then actually took him back, but placed him under another erecter. But from that time the workman lost all the respect and goodwill of many among us. He was thought to have disgraced himself, to have gone under the yoke; and many a one cut him dead from that moment. The foreman under whom he now worked—with the utmost zeal, let me add—was reasonable enough not to count this "lack of character" against him, nor to bully him, which would have been only too easy. But I know how conscious the foreman was of his own impartiality as of something remarkable.

Again, in the case of three others, who simply absented themselves after the first week; the reason assigned by their own companions was their habitual loose living. Among them was one who had been my comrade in military service, whose wife had just had her fifth confinement; he had asked and promptly received an advance on this account from the manager, but his efforts to borrow from the rest of us met with no success. He suddenly left the works, and was shortly afterwards seen driving on Sunday with three boon companions. This man and the two others mentioned excited the abhorrence and indignation of all the workmen I knew best, who all, silently or loudly, condemned such conduct, a fact which I should like to emphasise. These three belonged to a class of working men held in no respect in Chemnitz, who never remain long in any one place, and who form the best, or at all events the surest, material for the dregs of our labouring class, the proletariat in the evil signification of the word.

This is the place for a general statement, in addition to what has already been said, as to the length of service in the factory of the six score of men among whom I lived and moved. I must again explicitly declare that my generalisations rest on observations made at a time the labour conditions of which were peculiar, as I have said. Nevertheless, it may be fairly said that our corps of workmen, taken all in all, was an extremely stable one. We had among us a good-sized nucleus, naturally made up of the older men, whose service in the factory could be reckoned by decades;

and this was not in the least because of any prospects of increased earnings, which, alas! they had not, but through the good old trait of settling down and remaining fixed in one's own country, a trait which, popular opinion to the contrary, I find deeply rooted in the hearts of at least the older generation of my workmen friends. The fluctuating element among us was made up, I need hardly say, of the young unmarried men, whose stay in one city or one factory was longer or shorter according to their whim or fancy, opportunity or zeal for learning; sometimes it was determined by pure chance, and, as I have said in another chapter, they had often seen a good deal of the world.

Between these two extreme groups there was plainly a third, a numerous one it seemed to me, composed almost entirely of married men, who remained from six to ten years in the same factory, but all their lives in one region. They were, therefore, quite as settled as the first group, which was chiefly recruited from them, and their changes from one factory to another, from time to time, were either because they hoped elsewhere to better their condition permanently, or because—and this was chiefly the reason—they tried to introduce a longed-for variety into the wearing monotony of factory work, which they had done too long and knew too thoroughly. The apprentices were naturally a class by themselves, and, finally, came the small number of the dissipated whom I last described.

Change of employment, when it did take place, was rapidly and reasonably accomplished. As I have said, we were under no obligation to give notice of leaving. Article II. of the labour regulations read as follows :—

"Operatives may leave or be discharged at any time without previous notification, provided that no special written agreement is violated thereby. Every workman, however, is bound before leaving to finish, if required, piecework previously begun.

"Notice of leaving must be given to the superintendent of works. Before leaving every workman must put his place in order, clean his machine, and deliver his tools to the superintendent, who will certify to their good condit

Thus the whole question of breach of contract was obviated at a single stroke, and both parties to the arrangement were satisfied. In this way the management was left with absolute freedom as to the disposition of its labour corps, a freedom which it used discreetly and humanely in general, and the workmen had always the possibility of immediately taking any better place which might offer, while the first week's wages, kept back on the first pay-day and returned to them at departure, compensated to some extent, at least, for the certainly greater risk of instant dismissal. There has been a great deal of discussion lately over breach of contract and its penalties. Here is a very simple solution which involves no pecuniary loss to industrial establishments, as experience proves in our own, and, I believe, in other factories where the same custom obtains. Yet, even did it involve such loss, this should not be the preponderating consideration where things of much higher import are at stake. Even in the economic life of nations moral considerations must take precedence of material interests, and we, the non-partisan, educated class, who desire to bring to the solution of the social question the standard of earnest ethical principle, with no bias of prejudice, must struggle more and more to realise this fundamental truth. The fact that certain great corporations may earn a few thousand marks more or less, must not weigh with us, if thus conditions are to be abolished, which though legally right are in reality unjust, because of the compulsory character of the economic situation, and which are not far from dealing a mortal blow to the very sense of justice itself in the minds of our people. Are the industrial establishments of Germany really less able to take into account these serious moral considerations than the labouring classes, who have already declared themselves willing, in the social-democratic programme, to pay the price of increased uncertainty of earning a livelihood, for the boon of doing away with all fixed terms in notification of leaving work? For my part, I frankly confess entire sympathy with this step of the social democrats.

Let me say a few words more upon my own experience in looking for work. At that time it was much easier for skilled workmen,

such as vice-hands and lathe-hands, to find employment in factories or small shops than for common hands, or weavers, or those who simply tend machines. In seeking work at the factories we were generally curtly repulsed by the porters. In the rare cases when we were able to apply directly to the manager we were treated kindly and courteously; sometimes a bit of good advice was given us, which, to be sure, under the circumstances was not very helpful. Nor did the advertisements in the daily papers and inns meet our needs. Those in the inns were posted on large bulletin boards, and hung on the wall by the "Hausvater" of the central inn; they set forth the kinds of work required, the number of workmen wanted, the nature of the employment desired, and in many cases the amount of wages, so that everyone could inform himself. I did not see—though I cannot vouch for their absence—one of the instances said to be common in inns, when favoured individuals secretly receive information from the "Hausvater" as to the best situations. We who had come from a distance to Chemnitz, strangers, naturally suffered more than the rest from the difficulties of this fruitless search for employment. The man who had acquaintances, or one who had the sad benefit of past experience, fared better. It happens not seldom that instead of permitting himself to be rebuffed, the seeker for work slips up behind the porter, drops a fee into his hand and learns in return when there is a place vacant in the factory. Such information is received also from kind friends, from former mates at work in the factory, and hints are given as to the best manner and moment of applying; how, perhaps, to reach the manager himself, who then hears favourably of the applicant. But in all these ways there is, of course, much room for mere good luck, and the stranger cannot build much upon any of them. At all events, I can bear testimony from my own experience to the inexpressibly depressing effect of being obliged to trudge from factory to factory, from shop to shop, always offering one's abilities and capabilities, and always in vain. Forced idleness, even when hunger's iron fist is not yet knocking at the door, is the most terrible lot that can befall a strong and active man, eager to pro-

vide for his family; and the more serious and fine his character the more bitterly does he feel his fate. Here lurks more danger of his physical and moral undoing than in any agitation of social democracy.

Two pages of our factory regulations consisted of extremely practical and clear directions for the prevention of accidents, which were for the most part intelligently followed. During my stay in the factory we had only one serious accident, that laid a man up for about two weeks; an iron tire, weighing perhaps twenty pounds, had fallen edgewise on his foot, cutting through his boot and making a deep flesh-wound clean to the bone. On the other hand, small accidents continually occurred, bruised fingers and toes, hands cut by sharp points or edges, painful injuries to the finger nails, iron filings in the eye. This last was particularly common, but in most cases followed by no ill results; the men rendered each other prompt and skilful aid.

In all the work the great danger was the dropping of the large castings, often weighing hundreds of pounds. A false hold, a letting go at the wrong moment, might cost a foot or a leg. The work, therefore, was generally done with instinctive prudence and care. It was a fundamental rule that whatever was once grasped must be held, no matter what the strain, until it could be safely put down. Besides, directions were given, once for all, that as many workmen must be put on each piece as was necessary to ensure them and the work they were doing against chance of injury. In this way every over-exertion was avoided, a fact thankfully acknowledged by the men themselves. The task of transportation was much lightened also in our building by means of the three cranes. There were, moreover, as I have said, electric bells everywhere, by the means of which, in case of accident, the engineer could be signalled in an instant to stop the engines. Then there were strict rules against entering the testing-room except on business, putting on belts while the machinery was in motion, etc. The men were required also to wear snug clothing, so that there should be nothing to catch in the whizzing wheels among which they had to walk. Of actual guards on the

machines themselves there were less than might be supposed, yet they were put up whenever it was necessary. One corner of our building was a sort of emergency ward, fitted up with mattresses, surgeon's table and chair, bandages, washing apparatus, etc. One of the hands, who had formerly been a hospital steward, was always ready to give the first assistance, could put on a bandage in case of need, and superintend the removal of injured men. Shortly before my coming to the factory a change had been introduced in the manner of transporting victims of accidents; a change gratefully accepted, yet regarded by the workmen as only the fulfilment of a binding duty. Instead of using, as heretofore, the rough handcart belonging to the factory, the directors' carriage was now put in requisition to convey the wounded man to his home or to the hospital.[1] Toilet conveniences, however, were entirely insufficient, and afforded only a miserable opportunity for superficial washing of face and hands. In such grimy machine-shops the erection of baths, free for the use of everyone, is a plain duty, particularly when one considers the wretched conditions in the lodging-houses, the crowded life in common of so many people of both sexes, and the necessity of a daily and thorough cleansing of the whole dirty body. But baths were entirely wanting in our case, nor was there any sort of provision for our comfort save the dining-hall I have already described, unless, indeed, one should so reckon the sale of good clothes at reasonable prices for cash, conducted by the one-armed shipping clerk, with permission of the management.

Yet the work in the factory was heavy and exhausting for all of

[1] The manager corrects this statement of my labour associates in a manner to be thankful for, as follows :—"It has happened only once, so far as I know, that a labourer, whose foot had been slightly wounded, was carried home across the street, on the hand-barrow. I regarded this procedure as very sensible on the labourer's part, since it would have taken too long a time, in proportion to the shortness of the distance, to summon a hack. The factory's vehicle—I do not mean by this the managers' carriage, which is used on Sunday by them scarcely three or four times yearly—can be used for conveyance to the hospital, of course, only when it is at home; as a rule, it goes in the morning and afternoon to the railway."—THE AUTHOR.

us. I do not speak from my own experience; I know that my case was exceptional, and that at first, at all events, everything was doubly hard for me. I judge solely from the talk of the men, and the impression they themselves made on me. All of them, except the boys, were more or less weary and worn out at the end of the day's labour; their movements were not so quick, light, and elastic as in the morning or at noon; their mood not so cheerful, and the amount of work done in the last hour was visibly less than that done in the first. It cannot be denied that factory work like ours spends daily the whole of a man's strength, even when he works at so satisfactory a rate of speed, in a process so superior, and relatively speaking, so stimulating to the intelligence, and with the freedom of action and independence that were the rule with us. It is truly no small matter to be for eleven hours every day, with one hundred and twenty other men, in a hot room, the air of which is heavy with oil and grease, and full of coal and iron dust. In fact, it is not the work and the heavy lifting, severe though it be; it is the oppressive atmosphere, overcharged with the breath and the perspiration of so many men, it is the nerve-splitting, never-ending noise, rattling, grinding, straining, groaning, and the unbroken standing for eleven hours, often in the self-same spot in eternal monotony of occupation—it is these all together that make our factory work something so racking and weakening that it ought to be placed on the same level with any severe mental strain. It must be performed at the full tension of a man's best strength, and this, not the result of the toil nor its greater or less utility, is its true moral measure. Yet at the same time I must acknowledge that a comparatively large number of grey heads were to be found among our operatives. Thus there were among the vice-hands some men who had been in the Reserve Corps in the war with France; three of the four packers, if I do not mistake, were in the neighbourhood of sixty years of age; one man in my own section was in the middle of the forties, and one well over fifty; among the pattern-makers worked a friendly old fellow with hair snow white, and one of the drill-presses was tended by a man who had

long been a grandfather, to whom I was very much attached, while his brother, a vice-hand of about his own age, had his place near by. As I enumerate them, more grey heads come to my remembrance. Indeed, two men, seventy years old, if I were correctly told, were still employed in some light service, although their pay, to be sure, was correspondingly meagre. The majority of the hands, however, were naturally in the prime of life, strong, strapping fellows in the twenties and thirties. Those between seventeen and twenty were far less numerous, and of the apprentice lads we had but few.

A definite conception of the character of our factory regulations is to be gained from the first and last paragraphs of the little pamphlet, the one relating to admittance, the other to eventual changes in the regulations themselves. The first paragraph is word for word as follows: "The right to admit workmen belongs exclusively to the management or its representatives. By accepting employment every workman subjects himself to the factory regulations, a copy of which he receives on admission, and the receipt of which he must acknowledge under his own signature in a book provided for the purpose." And the last clause runs thus: "Changes in these regulations or additions to them will be announced by bulletin and will be immediately enforced."

Here is exhibited, sharp and clear, even to the unsuspecting mind, the real character of these as well as most other factory regulations. They are plainly the product of the management, fashioned solely according to its idea of its own selfish interests. They are household rules which the proprietor establishes at his own will, and to which everyone must submit so long as he remains a member of the household. For the workman there is no other protest against such regulations, than withdrawal from the society in which they are law. Their existence and validity proclaim, in every case of importance, the complete and unappealable subjection of the working class; they are the expression of a system of absolutism which is the exact opposite of the industrial freedom which should be to-day the ruling law in the

economic life of nations; they are a new and pregnant cause of the dependence and immaturity of character among the factory hands of the present time.

Yet it remains to be said, in taking leave of the subject—and this is my second point—that the severity of these entirely one-sided regulations was in our case greatly softened, and often wholly cancelled, by the prudence and tact with which they were administered. The written provisions were quite subordinated to the energetic personality of our director, from whose vigorous and military, but reasonable, just and impartial way of carrying them out, they assumed a new and vital aspect; he was a man, as I shall have occasion to illustrate, who commanded obedience. The others in authority, especially the foremen, administered the rules, as a whole, so wisely, gently and considerately, that the men readily accepted the unpalatable clauses, and only in the rarest instances became conscious of their extreme rigour.

In concluding this chapter I should like to speak of the men's behaviour during work, and their relation to each other and to their superiors. The whole body of workmen was, in this respect also, divided into two large groups, namely, the department for manufacturing tools, and that for manufacturing embroidery-machines. The absolute disconnection of the two processes of work resulted, speaking generally, in a complete separation of the men engaged in them, so much so that they were often entirely unacquainted with each other. In consequence, they passed in and out of the factory without a sign or word of greeting, mutually ignorant of one another's names and opinions. Of course an acquaintance gradually formed itself among those who had been for years connected with the works, in spite of the difference in their occupation, but even then it was confined, for the most part, to a perfectly superficial and fleeting exchange of words during occasional recesses. The common hands who were oftenest sent from one part of the works to the other, were in reality the sole connecting link between the two great corps of workmen, to which a third division may be added, the small isolated body of pattern-makers.

But naturally there was a very lively intercourse within each of the three groups during work-hours. Indeed, the nature of our system of joint-production, as I have described it, compelled acquaintance. There were occasional exceptions, as in the case of some of the older men who had worked as vice-hands for twenty years, and who had nothing to do with the young vice-hands. But such cases were to be explained by the less elastic friendliness of older people, and by the constantly fluctuating youthful element. Otherwise, however, the joint character of our industrial process brought the men constantly into close contact, and forced comradeship upon them.

Intercourse was especially brisk, naturally, between men of the same age doing the same work, under one foreman or in one division. Such acquaintance was usually very intimate, and every opportunity for a private talk, long or short, was eagerly seized. The conversation took an indifferent or a serious turn, as it happened, or sometimes they merely played jokes or wrestled together. New-comers were criticised in detail; small bits of factory gossip were exchanged, as, for example, that the porter and the canteen-keeper had been discharged, or that the driver had left, and why. Often also something which had happened in a common lodging-house was discussed in all its bearings, or the last Sunday's excursion was recounted and a new one planned; but above all they loved to talk about their children, and to tell and hear endlessly detailed stories of their own past lives. Quite as often, however, while the files slid to and fro and the machines were rattling, and two or three men busy with measuring and adjusting, the talk would fall on serious matters: religion, politics, economics, questions of culture, also discussed, of course, in their own manner, and with the capacity and degree of understanding at their command. The following chapter will deal with this topic; here the bare statement is enough.

But most of all they indulged in practical jokes and wrestling and boxing bouts whenever they could. Among friends who were ready to give and take a joke something was for ever going on; a lump of clay would be thrown from a hiding-place at the unwary

passer, apron strings were slyly untied, or the seats whipped away during the recess, or they would jump suddenly into each other's way, or "pay a compliment." This "complimenting" was a favourite joke at the end of the week with the older men, whose beard was heavy, and whose habit it was, according to the widespread custom of the people, to shave only on Saturday or Sunday. Such a one would seize by the head a younger man, whose cheeks and chin were still tender, and rub his own rough growth of bristles backwards and forwards across the other's face half a dozen times, a sensation by no means agreeable! Before the one thus "complimented" could recover himself, the evil-doer had vanished. Still more unpleasant was another joke that was played on me, happily but once, the so-called "beard-waxing." One of us would be leaning idly against a post by chance with nothing to do for the moment; two others would see him in this unguarded position. A mutual glance of understanding, and one of the two would step behind him, pinioning his arms so that he could not make a movement, the other with two black and dirty hands would seize the face of the first thus taken by surprise, and composedly, pressing firmly with the thumbs, would stroke apart the moustache of the helpless one, a proceeding, which, as I can testify, is excessively painful. This joke, however, was never tried twice on me, because as I made a motion of the head, in self-defence, on the first occasion, my spectacles fell from my nose. They did not break, but the men did not risk it again, and accordingly let me alone in future. Among intimates no one was spared, and every one suffered without distinction of age; this kind of prank could only be played, of course, when the victim was off his guard. Other tricks and jokes of all sorts were very frequent and were often extravagantly funny, so that we could not help laughing heartily over them; sometimes they were coarse and rough. Of these I shall have more to say.

Nicknames were plentifully distributed; even the manager had one, a perfectly harmless one to be sure, his own Christian name. Otherwise, it was usual in the factory to call only the very popular by their first names; among these were the wags and jokers who,

wherever they went, were either the cause or the subject of the most rollicking spirits.

Cheerfulness, gaiety, even wild mirth, was the prevailing tone of disposition in our building, at least during work ; nor was this wholly absent even from the last afternoon hour of our long day, when fatigued and flagging muscles began to tell. The favourable character of our industry, no less than the calm and joyous temperament of the race itself, contributed to this fortunate circumstance. This fresh gaiety and light-heartedness was the good spirit which helped to make the heavy work easy and tolerable. It was strange that with all this there was little or no singing. Here and there individuals would hum an air to themselves, and there was one squad of vice-hands, mostly young fellows in love, who would sometimes break out into a familiar ballad or soldier song. The incessant noise was probably the restraining cause.

The mutual use of the second person singular in address *(Du)* was by no means universal, although customary among men of the same section among themselves, between those of the same age, and those belonging to the same neighbourhood. On the other hand, many of the vice-hands, particularly such as were from a distance, or of better family, were most punctilious, and except among themselves, very sparing in its use, while they showed plainly their disapprobation if it happened that one of their comrades lavished "thou" indiscriminately on every first-comer. Very often, too, the older and tried workmen, vice-hands, or other mechanics, used the intimate form in conversation with a superintendent. The superintendents, again, used it in addressing the foremen ; and oftener still the foremen used it in speaking with the workmen of all grades, even the common hands, although but seldom to the men of their own section, and then only to the older and more settled among them. Foremen nearly always addressed each other as "thou" ; not so the superintendents. With these latter a higher social standing was to be considered, while with the former the inherent feeling of equality, the habits of military comradeship, and an easily awakened sympathy for each other,

made it readily possible to follow natural inclination, and use the more intimate address.

The peculiar relation in which we five hand labourers stood to each other deserves mention. Of all the workmen, it was easiest for us to be idle at one another's expense. There were a quantity of nooks and corners in the factory in which it was possible to take a quiet half-hour's rest, unobserved by the superintendent, or a good friend among the vice-hands or other mechanics would send us on a nominal errand. To guard against this a mutual secret espionage sprang up quite spontaneously. There were two of our number who were especially prone to shirk, and on these the others kept a sharp and watchful eye. We blinked the question often, to be sure, but now and then when they carried it too far, we told them our mind, frankly and seriously, without mincing matters. A vigorous quarrel always ensued, and a state of ill-humour, lasting days, or sometimes weeks. But the admonition generally bore good fruit, and tolerable relations were again established between the two disputants. A closer comradeship existed between the three others, each of whom took hold of his work in good earnest, and did not throw an undue burden on the others. All the men in our group were especially kind and considerate to me as a novice. On the first day when I entered the factory, it was evident that I could not fall to as vigorously or stick to the work as closely as my experienced companions. But they at once had consideration for me, and instead of taking advantage of their new and shy comrade, by giving him more than his share of work, they set him at the easiest tasks, or even sometimes put him aside altogether, to do the work more readily and quickly themselves. Most of the vice-hands and other mechanics treated me in the same brotherly spirit of friendly forbearance. Later on, as I became stronger and more expert, and as my powers of endurance increased, this state of things naturally came to an end, and I was driven as hard as, but no harder than, the rest.

The relation of the vice-hands, machinists, and forgemen to the common hands was also interesting in many respects. Outside the factory there was no feeling of the difference in rank in most

cases, but it was otherwise during the working hours. They knew that we were there for the service of the rest, and they took advantage of the fact without hesitation, though with a difference. The older men made use of our assistance only when it was necessary, and somewhat ungraciously; the younger, on the other hand, called on us continually, even the apprentices tried to put on airs of command. The hands obeyed in their turn every order, provided only that it was decently given; no one but resented being snarled at in the style of an army sergeant. Whoever put on that manner was boycotted silently, and without any concerted action; the hands simply ignored him, kept away from his place of work, seemed not to hear when they were called; and when they were directly appealed to, and their help asked, they always found themselves busy about something else. In such cases the boycotted man was obliged to apply to the superintendent to detail some assistance. If he then complained of any of the hands, or even hinted a charge against one of them, it was so much the worse for him, and he was let entirely alone as a backbiter, and, moreover, gained no favour with the superintendent. For this reason the skilled workmen found it desirable to be on good terms with the common hands, and to treat them courteously when their services were required. The most usual way of asking help was something like this:

"Pst! here! are you at leisure?"

"Yes."

"Then let us do so-and-so together; it won't take long."

Or someone would say:

"We've got to get this shaft out of the way; but it is heavy. Will you get one or two more and help us?" And almost always he who had called for help lent a hand himself to the work.

The erecters (monteurs) held somewhat the position of under-superintendents towards their gangs. The relation between them was partly that of the official, partly that of the comrade. In all matters relating to the work they were treated with thorough respect; otherwise, the intercourse was a very hearty one. This was particularly true when the gang was made up of men of their

own age, or older than themselves, which not infrequently happened, for we had a number of quite young foremen among us. I did not learn how these had been promoted; they had all been average workmen, no more. Such young foremen generally let the older men work pretty independently, and at their own pace; orders were confined to what was strictly necessary. Besides, it may be said here, that some of the older vice-hands were entirely exempt from working in gangs, and reported directly to the superintendent-in-chief.

The older erecters impressed their workmen, to a certain extent, with their own technical characteristics. Gangs with skilled and staunch foremen were visibly more intelligent and efficient than those whose erecters had often to ask advice of their more experienced associates. Morally, also, the influence of the foreman made itself felt now and then among his men. Yet, this influence was identical and capable of various workings; with some it was for the better, but with the majority it was of little good. This is but too easily explained when one remembers that these people had formerly themselves been in the ranks of the working men, and that they had never been shown the duty of setting a good example. For this reason I seldom heard one of them reproach a workman for an obscene word, an oath, or an ignoble sentiment. It was a great deal gained if a foreman kept himself personally free from such things; oftener they shared the tone of the men, and joined in their swearing and vulgarity. The erecter is of special importance to the apprentices who are assigned to different gangs. According to the ability of the foreman, and the gang to which he belongs, will the youngster learn his trade. But, so far as I could see, neither erecter, master-mechanic, nor superintendent-in-chief gave themselves much trouble about the apprentices entrusted to them. Only in one single instance do I recall that a foreman—perhaps our very best, a noisy but thoroughly good-hearted fellow, who, without being a hard drinker, took now and then, on Sundays, a glass too much—took an almost fatherly interest in the apprentice placed in his charge. This was, however, an unusually bright and handsome lad, whose father, a

school teacher with considerable property in the place, maintained constant personal relations with the foreman in question, very much to the latter's profit. After my limited experience, I do not venture to decide whether an apprentice is better placed in large works or in a small establishment; yet, I think I may say that the factory seems to offer obvious advantages in education over any which can be had of the small artisan, who is ordinarily struggling for an existence, and chiefly engaged upon small jobs and repairs. The danger to morals is as great in one place as in the other.

Outside the factory gates the foreman, the vice-hand, the other machinist, and the common hand were equals in rank; the distinctions which necessarily grew out of their callings vanished, and they were, and felt themselves to be, banded together in the common cause of labour. Nothing decided their personal intercourse except mutual inclination, similarity of feeling, and propinquity. The position of the superintendents differed from that of the foremen in the works. Their social superiority in the factory, and yet more outside it, was perfectly evident, although they had not infreqüently risen from the ranks, but only seldom from lower positions in the same factory. They were distinguished from all the rest by their dress; they had no particular working suit, but wore the ordinary frock-coat with cravat and white linen. They formed the connecting link between the operatives and the higher officials of the concern, even up to the management itself; they were—and in truth I know no better comparison—the sergeants of the factory. They were the technical directors of the business in detail, responsible to the management, and dictating all matters connected with the individual workmen; they had control of all the operatives, and—a thing to be specially noted—they were influential in fixing the limit of the wages both in time and piecework. They set the rate of speed, and were able to prevent men from being discharged in dull times. When actual crises occurred they helped to determine which of the men must go; and finally they were in a position to set aside quietly many an unsuccessful piece of work, and to conceal many a bungling job. All this made them, to the

men and the management alike, the most important persons in the factory, and controlled their relations and associations with the men, and *vice versa.*

This relation was wholly that of superior to subordinate; and it was agreeable or disagreeable according to the personality of the individual. In our immediate neighbourhood we had four of these superintendents. One of them had the reputation among all my mates of being coarse and common-minded and a mischief-maker, unfit for his place; friendly to the face, slanderous behind the back, and every new-comer was warned against him. His remarks were parried without contradiction, but everyone showed toward him a certain proud reserve, repelled every perceptible advance on his part, and often received his orders with a smile of secret superiority. Two of the other superintendents did their duty honestly and straightforwardly, did not mingle too much with the men, were now and then rough with them, and were usually paid back in the same coin. There was not much specially noticeable in their behaviour; they had little personal popularity. It was quite otherwise with the fourth, who was immensely popular with most of us. He was a clever man, skilled in his work, prosperous and versatile, and with a great gift of handling men. He could scold sharply enough, but he could also make a joke on occasion, and always took the part of his men against the other superintendents or the managers themselves if need were. In the morning when he came in he gave everyone a "good-day," shut his eyes to a little loafing now and then when he knew that the work was not specially pressing, and was not deaf and distant to petitions for increase of pay. He was shrewd enough to treat the older men who had been long in service with a shade more courtesy and cordiality than the younger hands. As is natural and psychologically easy to understand in people of his degree of cultivation, he had his favourites and his scapegoats, which, however, were never for long the same. His orders, always given in a pleasant tone and a tactful manner, were willingly and immediately obeyed, although individuals according to their age or disposition might have a secret quarrel

with him; nor was the manner of all the same to him; some were more cordial, some less so; some were self-assertive, and others servile and evidently anxious to be in his good graces. There was, for example, an old fellow of my section, a man well over fifty, who touchingly exerted all his failing strength whenever the superintendent came by, in order to let it be seen that he was still able to do his full share of the work. Others evidently felt themselves on a familiar and easy footing with him, and a few embittered souls showed him a veiled hostility. The younger, less stable element obeyed him without opposition, and took pains not to incur his displeasure. Yet even these superintendents exercised no appreciable good moral influence. On the contrary, they were closely akin to those under them, in their whole education, modes of thought and aim, and by the very authority of their social position they often confirmed the rather low standard of morality in conduct and ideal by an occasional remark.

The superintendents held a more intimate relation to the foremen, with whom they naturally had much friendly and even more business intercourse, since they were obliged to discuss together in detail the machines in process of construction. How they stood with one another I could not exactly discover. There was an evident class-feeling, but also a certain amount of rivalry, in one case, at least, reaching to envy, and in another to contemptuous derision. Their relation as a whole may perhaps be fairly compared to that between subalterns in the army. Once it came to an open quarrel between two of them, in which they abused each other in good round terms to the delight of the men.

It still remains to glance at the workmen's relation to the clerks in the office, and to the engineers and draughtsmen. The former were regarded by the operatives as belonging to a different social class, and separated by inward and outward barriers from themselves. This feeling was strengthened by the fact that they seldom came into the factory proper, and had very little contact with the men. When they had anything to do with them, the bearing of these gentlemen from the counting-house and the designers' office

was such as to justify, in my opinion, in at least half the cases, the complaints of the men as to their arrogance or unfeelingness. There was in particular one engineer or draughtsman, I do not now remember which, who had occasional dealings with the marker (man who lays out the work—Anreisser) in regard to the models. To none of us did he vouchsafe the slightest word of greeting, not even to the marker himself, whom we were all accustomed to treat with much respect. This was bitterly resented by the simple-hearted workmen, who are exceedingly sensitive in such matters. They appreciated all the more keenly and gratefully the friendliness of some among the gentlemen, especially one slim young salesman, whose polite and simple manner made us all his friends. Some of the book-keepers and accountants stood naturally in closer relations to the men.

In taking a comprehensive view of the workmen's intercourse with each other, and, above all, with their superiors, one is struck by its twofold characteristic; first, the strange relation, half equality, half subservience, of the different classes of workmen to their *chargés d'affaires*, if I may use the term, as well as to each other; and second, the woeful lack of all forces making even in a moderate degree for moral development.

This half-cordial half-subordinate relation is very striking and strange, because it stands in sharp contrast to the former character of the organisation and discipline of our great industries, which, as is to be seen even in our own factory regulations, are really founded on the aristocratic principle of the absolute subordination of the labourer to his employer, and his dependence on the latter in the matter of work and wages. Yet this apparent contradiction is perfectly explained by that principle of *laisser aller* which determines in general our economic life. But while this doctrine of the free movement of all men and all forces has been twisted—and accordingly rendered valueless—into leaving labour and the conditions of labour at the unrestricted disposal of factory managers, it has in other respects simply left the relation of the workmen among themselves to take care of itself. And the men, thrown back on their own resources, naturally transferred, in the begin-

ning, the earlier and established relation of journeyman and master in the day of small handicrafts, to the great modern collective labour of the large industries. But here, where the former master is no longer an independent arbiter, the relation at once assumed a democratic character, with the result that the workman now submits to unwritten rules and regulations of superiors, who are themselves subordinate, just so far as such submission is necessitated by the nature of the industry, and is at the same time compatible with his personal dignity. It is obvious how important these democratic-socialistic habits during work must be to the wage-earner's economic thought.

Not much more need be said in regard to the second characteristic mentioned, namely the lack of moral factors, and of a conscious realisation and application of them on the part of the authorities, high and low. The fact speaks for itself with painful eloquence. It shows for its part what this whole chapter reveals concerning the nature of factory-work, and what may be summed up in a word: that all our magnificent industrial establishments represent only institutions for the creation of material values alone. Whatever moral potencies are working in them are the result of favourable conditions purely accidental, not that of conscious endeavour. In all of them there is still wanting the moral nobility which would be theirs as soon as they were organised and utilised as places destined to be the newest and grandest form of human association in life and labour, and to offer to all within their walls, high and low alike, by means of division of labour, an equally favourable opportunity for the happy exercise of their mental powers and the harmonious development of their moral being. Only when this conception of a factory's mission shall have become universally recognised and authoritative, whether freely or reluctantly, will the modern institution of the factory acquire its moral *raison d'être* and become the valued means of bearing humanity a mighty step forward towards its immeasurable destiny. And I venture to believe that the realisation of this ideal is highly compatible with those considerations of the industrial advancement and material productivity of great establishments, which are in truth equally

important, provided that the managers of such establishments are to some extent penetrated with a consciousness of the tremendous educational problem they are bound to solve for the sake of their calling and their country, for morality and for religion. And to this consciousness they must be brought, willingly or unwillingly, simply by the pressure of a new, better, more ideal, moral and Christian public opinion.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AGITATION OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

CHEMNITZ is one of the first and oldest seats of German social democracy. As long ago as the year 1867 it returned to the North German Reichstag the social democrat, Försterling, a coppersmith from Dresden, who did not, however, long remain a member of that assembly. Then, shortly after the war, the "furious Most" made Chemnitz his headquarters, and was there chosen deputy in 1874, and again in 1877. In the election of 1878, after the attempt on the Emperor's life, he was overwhelmingly defeated; but in 1881 social democracy won back the district through the Breslau author, Bruno Geiser, and controlled it also in 1884, only to lose it once more in 1887. In the last election, however (1890), another social democrat was returned, the well-known Max Schippel, son of the superintendent of schools in Chemnitz.

Thus for almost twenty-five years social democracy has been agitating in Chemnitz and the vicinity, and here, during the whole of this period, the party leaders have been engaged in the work. It is not surprising, therefore, that as early as 1881 more than 10,000 social-democratic votes were cast here, which increased in 1887 to over 15,000, and in 1890 to 24,642; nor is it to be wondered at that in the suburb where our factory was situated, and where most of us lived, 750 social-democratic, and only 150 so-called "patriotic," votes were cast.

Faithful to this record, the party agitation was incessantly active during the summer of 1891, and here, as in nearly all other German cities, it was the only one observable. It was thoroughly well planned, forcible and detailed. Large weekly public meet-

ings for men employed in some particular branch of industry, or for men and women both, were the ordinary means employed for keeping the attention of the entire wage-earning population fixed upon the Labour party. At these meetings, to be sure, or, at least, those of them where I was present, the attendance was usually rather slight; it was only in the event of some special interest touching more than one of the different trades, or when some famous speaker or social-democratic leader from a distance was to appear, that they swelled to imposing mass meetings; at other times the average audience varied between 100 and 200 persons. Working men prominent in the movement always gave the tone to any discussion of social-democratic affairs. Commonly, these were men of good standing. I remember that in the first meeting of the sort to which I went in the character of a workman, I was the only one present in the soiled suit in which I had been working, without white collar or necktie; all the rest had put on their good clothes. But, at all events, the purpose of these meetings—to fix the attention of the people on the movement itself—was effected by the great red placards posted in every nook and corner of the city and suburbs announcing them. Besides, they formed only the framework for the more ardent and individual agitation in the different parts of the city and suburbs.

Hardly one of these districts but had its social-democratic campaign club, which, not only in the case of a forthcoming election, but throughout the entire year, pursued a quiet but sagacious and comprehensive policy of agitation, and whose members were the most fervid and intelligent adherents of the party. The campaign club takes charge of the agitation for the elections to the Reichstag, and latterly for the local elections as well; in great campaign meetings it furnishes a never-failing contingent to cheer the Labour orators at every opportunity, in blind fidelity to the accustomed boisterous party tactics. It is one of the treasuries of the party funds, and most important of all, it is the training school for social-democratic speakers. For it is not only the recently established working men's educational associations

which serve this end, nor special institutions like that which is said to flourish *sub rosa* in Hamburg; it may be boldly asserted that every social-democratic campaign club forms such a school of oratory for beginners. At least, in our club, which was supposed to number about 150 members, with monthly dues of ten pfennigs, this was certainly the case; and this is the reason why the utmost stress was always laid on the debates which followed either upon the lecture of the evening, or the readings selected from articles in the social-democratic *Volkstribüne*. Indeed, the president of our club frankly avowed this at the opening of every debate, by urging everyone present to take an active part in it; an invitation always couched in the same words, somewhat as follows:—"Our campaign club holds its meetings principally for the sake of debate. It is desired that everyone should take part, and that everyone should express his opinion. No matter how poorly this is done, everyone may be sure of not being laughed at, since we meet every fortnight for precisely the purpose of training ourselves to cope successfully with the arguments of our opponents in larger assemblies." And it must be confessed that this exhortation was faithfully followed. The debates of these workmen, tired as they were with the day's toil, usually lasted from about eight o'clock in the evening until midnight. Young and old, without distinction, spoke whatever was in their thought. Ideas were expressed, often in the crudest form, and in sentences not one of which was properly constructed, betraying a fearful jumble of knowledge and ignorance, practical experience and total inability to grasp the situation, with often such extravagance of views as startled the more cautious and practical members of the club. But beside these there were several speakers so clear, so ready in retort, of so keen and well-trained judgment, that I listened in silent and shamefaced admiration to these weavers, master-mechanics, and common workmen, whose eloquence and directness of thought and bearings are to be equalled, as far as my experience goes, by but a small proportion of what are generally known as the educated classes. And all who spoke, even if they spoke the most arrant nonsense, were

quietly and attentively heard, with a gravity almost childlike ; and what they were trying to express was, to my amazement, clearly and correctly understood. The fact that they gave each other hard hits in these debates, and that there was a constant clashing of the most diverse opinions, is worthy of especial mention, because it is in distinct contrast to the perfect unity which appears among social democrats on any public occasion of meeting their political opponents. The debates were conducted, in a certain sense, by means of answers to questions which were put in the query-box by the audience during the evening, and which usually asked for an explanation of some point touched upon by the speaker, or an unfamiliar or foreign word, or some article which had appeared in the daily paper. The answers, whether given by the president, the speaker, or someone among the audience, were usually fairly to the point, but often inadequate, or even altogether incorrect. But they were always given with the triumphant certainty which is one of the marks of the half-educated man who believes in his cause and in himself. Compared with the debates, the value of the lectures was small. They were generally short, and were always delivered by Chemnitzers prominent in party work, and they were often absolutely worthless, and evidently patched together from the columns of the last newspaper. In accordance with a custom prevalent everywhere among social democrats, however, such a lecture would be delivered by its author not only in our club, but in half-a-dozen sister organisations, each time with the same expression and the same emphasis word for word. Such a phenomenon can be explained only by the fanatic zeal for agitation, and the half-education which prevents the tedium of such a rehash from penetrating the people's consciousness.

Lecture and debate were followed, as I have said, with the closest attention by the forty or more men who were usually present. One saw in their bright and thoughtful eyes how their brains were at work to comprehend and assimilate the ideas presented to them. They generally smoked pipes, but now and then cigars, and they drank, on an average, one, or at most two, glasses

of beer, costing either eight or fifteen pfennigs the glass, according to quality. Only a few left the meeting before its close; a few also, overcome by the fatigue of the day's toil, fell at last quietly asleep, otherwise the most undivided attention prevailed; such evenings were for these men no mere recreation, but hard work; they were always hours of eager learning and profound reflection; they were inspiration and encouragement in the unvarying monotony of factory life. It may be said, without exaggeration, that such evenings have taken the place of the old-accustomed church-going. And herein, precisely, lies the great agitative importance of the Social-Democratic Campaign Club, with its regularly recurring meetings, in centres like Chemnitz. It is these evenings which act silently, persistently, lastingly, upon the working man inclined towards social democracy, until he is identified in heart and mind with the whole system of thought of the Socialist party; it is they which train their convert so that the fire of conviction kindled within him shall not uselessly flicker out, but shall burn high in agitation among his fellow-workmen and in his own family, as well as in public assemblies, when he enters the lists, for the common cause, against his political opponents.

Outwardly these evenings passed always in the same manner and under the same order of business, which was as follows:— The admission of new members, the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, the lecture, or, in its default, the reading of leading articles from some one of the social-democratic papers, ordinarily the *Berliner Volkstribüne*, a journal well suited to this purpose, and finally the questions and debate. Equally uniform and stereotyped were the words with which the otherwise eloquent president opened the meeting, and those in which the secretary presented the report of the previous evening; it was easy to see how superficial was the knowledge of parliamentary form among these simple people. Guests were always welcomed, but they were not very numerous, and were, without exception, from the labouring class. Every session was under the supervision of a royal gendarme and a local officer alternately; but these never stirred from their retired corner, and, on the whole, the personal

relations between them and the workmen seemed friendly enough. There was almost always a mutual "good-evening" exchanged, and on other nights I often saw the same officer, in his uniform, in a certain cosy "kneipe" much affected by our workmen, amicably drinking his beer at the round table with all the rest.

While my mates in the factory evidently desired to make me a member of the campaign club, I never could find an opportunity of getting into relations with the Chemnitz Trades Union of Metal-Workers. The union was never mentioned in the factory, and I had to avoid speaking of it in order not to seem impertinent or to become suspected as a spy, and thereby to fail utterly in my object. Other trade unions whose meetings I did attend, for example that of the lithographers, were even at that time discussing the weighty theme which occupies the minds of all bodies of working men to-day—the question, namely, whether central or local organisation is the best form for successful work under the present condition of repression.

Our club meetings were held in our own suburb in a restaurant which was the official, though not the only, rendezvous of the social democrats of the quarter. The proprietor and his wife were both social democrats, although they conscientiously refrained from taking part in long political discussions. The hostess displayed a coarseness of feeling such as I had never before seen in a woman. I remember well enough how, one evening, yawning and sleepy, she dismissed us, the last guests, with a blasphemy, "I want to go away and be with Christ." But, as I said, this was not the only meeting-place of social democrats. It may be broadly stated that all of the small restaurants ("kneipen") of our quarter were kept by social democrats. In two of the largest establishments, where there were spacious gardens, much frequented by the so-called best society of Chemnitz, and where, every Sunday, the best public dance-music was to be found, only the rooms, sublet for "cabmen's shelters," were social-democratic in tone. In almost every case it was visibly pure business interest which had converted the saloon-keepers.

The same thing was apparent in the small grocery shops, the "büdchen," as they are called. I often noticed with what zealous care the shopkeeper, especially if it were a woman, agreed to all the socialistic views of the customer. This socialism for business reasons is far more wide-spread in all such industrial centres than is commonly supposed; it is to be found among a great many different kinds of tradespeople, and is the despair of the ideally-inclined social democrats, for in most cases it is synonymous with absence of genuine conviction. But at the same time it is another proof of what a real power the social-democratic movement has become in such places.

In all the restaurants and beer-shops of which I have spoken, beside the local newspapers of different or no party bias, beside "Kladderadatch" and "Fliegende Blätter," there were always to be found one or more copies of social-democratic journals, the *Chemnitz Presse* in especial, and occasional trades publications. It is a fact long since recognised that social democracy wields a mighty weapon of agitation in its army of newspapers—more than 130 at the present time—scattered broadcast over Germany. In our suburb their influence and importance were manifest. It was a matter of course that every workman should read his paper. Here, too, the exception only proved the rule. As a general thing the men subscribed singly, or more often two or three together, to the *Social-Democratic Press*, a thoroughly circumspect sheet, better edited on the whole than our small provincial local paper, and independent enough to publish now and then a poem of Gerok or Uhland, as well as the windy utterances of the newest German school of poetry, captured by the social-democratic camp. Besides this, the *Landesanzeiger* (*Country Advertiser*), a good and discreetly-written paper, was taken, as also its cheaper offshoot, the *Neueste Nachrichten* (*Latest News*), a compact and thoroughly unpartisan little sheet. The tolerably fair-minded and patriotic *Chemnitzer Tageblatt* was glanced at now and then on account of its full advertising columns, but it was regularly read by only a very small number of workmen, the *élite* of the social democrats, who made it a rule—worthy of recognition and adop-

tion by many a Philistine "patriot"—to subscribe for one paper of each of the great political parties, which, among these people, invariably means a regular and thorough study of them. In this small circle I often found the *Berliner Volkstribüne*, then under the scientific, straightforward, and high-toned direction of Max Schippel, without personal gossip or party recrimination, virtues which it seems, unfortunately, to have lost under its new, more radical, and demagogic editor, Paul Ernest. Oftener yet I found the official organ of the Metal-Workers' Trades Union, which by no means confined itself to technical matters.

The distribution of other socialistic literature was undertaken in our district by a man out of work on account of the 1st of May, who acted as colporteur for the excellent social-democratic comic paper *Der Wahre Jakob*, as well as for its companion sheet, *Glühlichter*, published in Vienna. He received and filled orders for social-democratic periodicals, tried to sell photographs of Schippel, Bebel, and Liebknecht, or watch-charms, match-boxes, scarf-pins, printed with their pictures, and was always at the meetings, as well as on the pleasure excursions, which he often helped to organise. What else he did I do not know, but at all events I never saw any importunate attempt at propaganda on his part, especially among the new men. He was agent for the three social-democratic bookstores in Chemnitz. It is well known that these social-democratic bookshops, with unheard-of narrowness, deal only in social-democratic literature, or such literature as indirectly promotes the party cause. It is only recently that they seem to have reached a point of sufficient intellectual freedom and fairness to place on sale such books as the works of Schiller and Goethe, which are, to be sure, in their eyes, the productions of *bourgeoisie* incarnate. These shops are fruitful sources of agitation in Chemnitz, and have proved themselves to be important factors in popular education there.

A peculiar influence in the party agitation, and one not to be under-estimated, was that wielded by the two social-democratic comic papers, sold by the colporteur whom I mentioned. Whoever is familiar with them will agree that these papers are very

respectable publications of their kind. The illustrations are almost always good artistically, the jokes pointed and clever, but of course nearly always coloured by party politics; the humour is healthy and good. Their existence has always been a source of inward satisfaction to me, for it is a proof of the peaceful character of the whole great social-democratic movement. A band of rabid conspirators, a party with the single and conscious aim of bringing about a bloody revolution, whose sole and greatest joy lay in the total overthrow of existing institutions, would hardly occupy itself with comic papers like these; would, indeed, be incapable of producing them. Where, as in these two publications, wit can express itself blended with a genuine and joyous humour in distinction from mere satire filled with bitterness and inspired by hatred, the suspicion of blood-thirstiness is more and more removed; and it is from such small signs, trivial in themselves, that we may acquire the conviction that this movement, with all its moral dangers and its intellectual immaturities, with all the dangerous explosive material which is undeniably to be found within it, yet possesses such healthy vigour and pulsates with such fresh life that, under right influence and guidance, it may be made to become a mighty factor, blessed of God, in the future development of humanity.

The working men's and children's festivals, which take place nearly every Sunday throughout the summer, play a special part in the agitation. I do not know whether these are peculiar to the Chemnitz social democrats; certainly in Berlin in the winter, all sorts of balls, theatrical performances, concerts, and masquerades are equally prominent. I joined in three of these summer festivals; one in our own suburb, two others in places charmingly situated at a couple of hours' distance from Chemnitz. The impression is very clearly given that these festivals are meant for those who take no part in politics or economics, namely, the wives and children of the workmen. These, who cannot be reached by serious political party considerations, are to be won over to the party by means of pleasure in gay company and all kinds of entertainments, and so gradually to be filled with the

spirit of social democracy in this easy and agreeable manner. By making the children happy, the mothers' hearts are won; by getting up a little dance, the girls and boys, thinking only of their own amusement, are brought unconsciously into connection with the social-democratic movement, and their superficial interests, however disconnected in reality, seem to be bound up with those of the party. In places where social democracy has not yet established itself firmly, these festivals are especially popular, for they present a very attractive and harmless front, acceptable and not in the least terrible to even the most timid and undecided working man. In such cases, the summer festival does pioneer work for agitation in a peculiar sense, and usually far more successfully than any number of public meetings could do. They have, besides, one other especial function. They are invariably financial undertakings of the local party management, and their net profit, an object always in view and generally attained, helps to swell the party fund. So there are all sorts of devices, which I shall presently describe, for easily imposing a little extra expense. All this, however, does not interfere with the fact that many of those present simply give themselves over to quite harmless fun, and that, with many more, the real party aim is secondary to the child-like pleasure, deeply implanted in the people, of an unrestrained frolic among themselves. Under such circumstances, then, a social-democratic children's festival makes the same impression outwardly as most other "non-partisan" merrymakings of the populace.

Their success depends largely upon the place, the weather, and a fortunate plan of arrangement. I recall with great pleasure two out of the three festivals which I saw; one held in a country tavern, the "Jagdschenke" in Siegmar, near Chemnitz, and another at Einsiedel, an idyllic village about six miles distant. The day was fine, with a cloudless sky and a sparkling air. The first was a real children's festival, with baby-carriages and infants' cries, with the sounds of tin trumpets and harmonicas, with air-balloons and target-shooting. The following game, quite new to me, may serve as an indication of the innocent nature of the amusements. A young workman, fantastically dressed,

and hung all over with plain gingerbread nuts, appeared in the midst of the children and let himself be hunted; whoever succeeded in catching him might tear off one of the gingerbread figures. There was the merriest chase; the very image of a modern "Ratcatcher of Hamelin." Delightful to see, also, were the games which several of the workmen skilfully and patiently conducted for the children, and which a large number of the grown people watched with shouts of laughter. The games were entirely without party tendency; for example, the familiar and rollicking "Adam had seven sons," and others like it. Those who wanted to dance amused themselves in a very primitive hall, to the accompaniment of a zither, with the waltz and polka, while most of the married people stayed outside in the garden under the trees. A feature peculiar to social-democratic festivals was presented here as elsewhere—a "collection of curiosities." But I can give a better account of this when I describe the festival at Einsiedel, which was of a different character, and not so non-partisan and naïvely gay. This may have been owing to the large numbers of the Chemnitz people who here—exactly reversing the condition of the Siegmar fête—out-numbered the local attendance and set the tone, which, coming from the workmen of a large city drilled in social-democratic ways and feelings, usually lacks geniality and real spontaneity.

It may be interesting to see the programme, which, printed in red ink on yellow card-board, each comer received on payment of fifteen pfennigs entrance-money at the Einsiedel Festival, and which ran as follows:—

YOU ARE RESPECTFULLY INVITED

TO THE

GREAT SUMMER FESTIVAL

OF THE

WEAVERS' TRADE UNION OF EINSIEDEL AND VICINITY.
AMUSEMENT FOR LARGE AND SMALL CHILDREN OF BOTH SEXES

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 1890,

AT THE KAISERHOF HOTEL IN EINSIEDEL.
IN CASE OF RAIN TWO WEEKS LATER.

PROGRAMME.

Part I.

2 p.m. All children, big and little, assemble in the Kaiserhof.

3 p.m. Reception of the visitors coming by train from Chemnitz, and march to the Fest-platz.

4½ minutes after 3. Arrival at the Fest-platz.

Part II.

1. Great free concert by the world-famous concert band. Known as the eight-hour band.

2. Great shooting contest. Open to all little children of both sexes.

3. A climbing-pole, hung with sausages and other prizes, will be erected for young weavers and other wage-earners; but no one is permitted to climb higher than the pole.

4. Exhibition of the world-renowned instantaneous photographic process.

5. Great yarn-winding contest for elder children of the female sex.

6. Inspection of the finest collection of curiosities in the world.

7. Return to the city at 7, or 10.30 p.m.

8. Every guest must go home once in every thirty-six hours.

9. Whoever receives an invitation may become a guest; but guests must not be less than three ys, nor more than 90 years of age.

10. The Festival Committee are to be recognised by their lean stomachs and callous hands.

11. Dogs will not be admitted, as there is already a plentiful supply of curs.[1]

At the close, a magnificent torch-light procession and departure of guests by the 10.30 train.

[1] "Spitze."

The concert lasted, in fact, only from four till five o'clock, during which time the small and narrow grass plot of the restaurant garden was the scene of the boys' pole-climbing, the girls' archery, and the children's blind-man's-buff. There was a little prize for everyone; for the boys, knives, harmonicas, penholders, pocket handkerchiefs, and sausages; for the girls, ear-rings, brooches, portmonnaies, garters, handkerchiefs and little sausages, all articles cheap in themselves, and probably bought at a "bargain sale," for the handkerchiefs were printed with pictures of His Majesty William I. At five o'clock the young people began their dancing, and while the dance-music floated out of the open windows over the fête ground, a group of men collected from among the numerous company, and after a brief inspection by the police, who then withdrew to a little distance, sang various selections to popular airs from the social-democratic song-book. Men, women, and children crowded round the singers and listened intently to the songs which, to many of them, revealed a new world of daring thought in an impressive and captivating form. In a corner of the garden was set up the cabinet of curiosities of which I have already spoken, and which was an imitation of the never-failing photographers' stands at annual fairs and elsewhere. Everybody was obliged to enter; he who declined to do so was seized by the "officer," a workman dressed out in an old uniform and helmet, and carrying a wooden sword, and thrust in "under arrest" with the aid of several assistants. Strange, indeed, were the curiosities which formed the contents of the cabinet. There was a large club labelled "the club of Cain"; a round bit of glass: "the world's mirror"; a dried herring: "the gigantic whale"; an old rusty sword and knife: "weapons of 1848," and so on. Everyone on entering paid a fee of ten pfennigs, which the so-called curator of the curiosities received and credited in a note-book. I was inside just when the royal gendarme and the local officer were inspecting the suspicious show. It was, I must confess, a ludicrous scene: the two officials examining the nonsensical array with serious lowering faces, the sly effrontery of the showman's explanations, well equipped for such emergencies, and

the malicious laughter of the others present, who, as the officers withdrew, followed them with open gestures of derision.

The festival in our own locality was less pleasant; the weather was bad, and it was held in the bare and cramped courtyard of the restaurant. Here was again a cabinet, in which was shown a bottle labelled—workmen's sweat! The children wore aprons of red or of the German national colours, the older people had red scarves across the breast. Both the public rooms were thick with smoke, and crowded with guests until eleven o'clock. There was a great crowd about one of the round tables, which was the scene of a violent dispute between a knot of social democrats and one Bavarian, a merchant, just returned from America, whose presence was purely accidental. By his side sat, silent, the director of the brewery which supplied the landlord with beer, and whose coming had been determined by business considerations. The dispute became a hot one, tempered only by the imperturbable good-nature of the Americanised Bavarian, whose opposition was cool but not very telling. There was some noisy social-democratic singing, and finally the storm of discussion abated and subsided into a solemn drinking bout at the Bavarian's expense. I saw and heard much here of which I shall have occasion to speak later. This "Children's Festival" was no merry-making for children, but an out-and-out social-democratic party meeting, somewhat disorderly as well, and in sharp contrast to the simple pleasures of the Hirsch and Duncker Trade Unions [1] of the Chemnitz metal-workers and weavers which I attended on the Sunday following. Here I met two of our own master-mechanics, members of the Union, two of our best and quietest men. The appearance and behaviour of all the other guests at this concert and dance was on a par with theirs, and the whole tone of the entertainment was distinctly different from that of the social-democratic "Children's Festival" I have just described.

In the factory itself, during work hours, there was practically

[1] The Hirsch and Duncker Trade Unions are anti-socialistic labour organisations, which, in spite of encouragement, do not seem to be able to attain great importance.

nothing to be seen of open and ostensible political agitation on the part of out-spoken social democrats; a fact largely due to the energetic action of our technical manager, who was more discreet than "King Stumm."[1] He quietly allowed the great chalk inscription, "Workmen! vote for Schippel!" to remain for more than seven months over the entrance door of our building. He simply ignored it, as well as the "Hurrah for international social democracy!" which was to be seen scrawled in many a corner. But he had given the men fair warning: "Social democracy matters nothing to me. Outside you may paint yourselves as red as you like, but not in here; in here I am master, and whoever tries it here will leave in short order." The men knew that he was in earnest, and were accordingly careful not to overstep his injunction. Now and then an ardent social democrat, inclined to agitate, gave open expression to his political views, but only among his intimate acquaintances where he knew he was safe; for the rest, the little band of the faithful confined themselves to exercising an influence, indirect, but all the more intense, over the affairs of the management. A very few days after I went into the works, I observed that in such matters the entire personnel of our department were under a certain indefinable pressure, and that the guiding power of this silent influence was in the hands of a few well-defined personalities. When, for example, the management introduced any change in production, in method, in hours of labour or form of payment, it was easy to see how the men, hesitating and uncertain, suspended judgment, till all at once the countersign was given, and "public opinion" appeared, fully formed. And although this public opinion did not really represent many of the men, or even stood in direct opposition to their immediate interests, and was clearly obnoxious to them, yet it was a power which was respected, and against which they ventured but seldem to protest.

This is what I have seen in the way of concerted, organised agitation on the part of the social democracy of our locality. I do

[1] "King Stumm," an outspokenly arrogant employer, much disliked by the social democrats.

not say and I do not believe that this was the whole of its activity, but I can only describe what actually came under my observation. Its head and front was the not very numerous group of *élite* social democrats, the fanatical partisans who form the phalanx of the movement everywhere, who are the pole of crystallization for the thousands attracted about them. From this group arise the candidates for social-democratic votes, the subordinate leaders in individual districts, the chiefs of campaign clubs and trade unions, the members of committees appointed for agitation during elections. They were all more or less acquainted with the plans of the general central management, whose executive organs they were, and from which alone they took their instructions. They directed the festivals, led the debates in public assemblies and discussions, acted as travelling orators in the outlying districts, were untiring lecturers in the regular meetings of campaign clubs and trade unions, and even dictated the course of the most influential men in industries where not one of themselves was represented. By the other workmen they were recognised—outwardly at least—as leaders, without opposition, and treated with an extraordinary and interesting mixture of assured good-fellowship and reverential respect, to which, on their side, they responded with a kind of studied *bonhomie* and conscious reserve. Yet they were not all honoured and respected equally; one was better liked than another, this one more popular than that one, according to tact of manner or address, or the whole disposition of the man. There were the two brothers N., for example, who stood at that time at the head of the agitation in Chemnitz, and who—particularly one of them—were very prominent speakers at the meetings of our club, as well as at the Sunday festivals; now, however, as I hear, one of them has been expelled from the party, and the other has withdrawn from it. These brothers were unpopular on account of their blustering and arrogant manners, while others were commended for their mild, firm, serious bearing. I have often heard this kind of perfectly independent criticism of their leaders from the older workmen in the factory, yet nevertheless the men acknowledged them as the guiding spirits, listened to their words

of authority, and accepted the instructions which were resolved upon for furtherance of the agitation, which was exceedingly well planned, and systematically organised and conducted. For the immediate carrying out of such instructions in detail only a small body of adherents was needed. And these were almost exclusively young persons between the ages of 18 and 23, overflowing with blind party zeal, and with youthful eagerness for action. They were the most useful and the most dangerous tools in the hands of these agitators; they were the young green timber to be fashioned into staunch supporters and successors. The mass of party followers, however, particularly such as had independent inclinations and social needs, bore no share in this organised agitation, for which indeed they had neither time, strength, nor the necessary means.

These devoted themselves to another and easier kind of agitation, which went hand in hand with that systematically organised and centrally administered. It might be called, in distinction to this latter, voluntary or irregular or accidental agitation, dependent on the judgment, the momentary feeling, the opportunity and the loyalty of individual members. It was, in one word, the personal influence exerted by the social-democratic workman upon his companion not yet or not wholly a social democrat; it was, so to speak, the covering of flesh, and the other the skeleton of the monstrous whole, known as the social-democratic propaganda. It was more important, more significant, more pregnant than the other, from which, indeed, it drew its power and its ideas, its whole intellectual equipment and its constant stimulus, but to which, in turn, it gave life and energy. It was not subject to any particular authority, it was not dependent on any time or place, or dictation of superiors, or costly undertakings, or outward preparations for festivities, although it developed a particular efficiency at such times, for example at the Sunday festivals. It relied only on the personality of the thousands of adherents which the party numbered in the place, on their enthusiasm, their loyalty and their powers of persuasion. It placed all ways and means at the disposal of the agitator; not only long theoretical expositions of the subject

and discussions around the beer tables, and social gatherings, and musical clubs, but the conversations between man and man over their work; the walks together on fine summer evenings after work was over, the long mutual visits of neighbours, the game of cards, everything, in short, which brought two or three men together. It made itself felt, often most effectually, in the spontaneous expressions of unguarded moments, in jests which flew from lip to lip, in criticism of the absent, in a single, curt, malicious sentence, a passing smile, a look, a meaning silence or swift significant gesture. And it is furthermore characteristic of this agitation, that it is often a matter of unconsciousness to the agitator himself, and this is the very moment of its greatest force and effectiveness. For then it is the direct expression of the inmost thoughts and feelings which govern the soul, the vital forces of faith; it is the stamp and impress of the man's own individuality, which is at its strongest when he speaks from his deepest conviction. This is why this kind of agitation, which goes on wherever social democrats are found, is so especially important; for behind it stands the whole personality of the agitator, to lend its weight and emphasis to his arguments.

This is also the reason why this form of irregular personal agitation is more likely than that which is organised or deliberately controlled to be coupled with a fanaticism which, in specific cases, may lead to sheer terrorism. In fact, precisely such terrorism was often to be felt in intercourse with workmen inclining to social democracy, most frequently and oppressively within the factory, of course, because there personal intercourse is found to be the closest and the most prolonged. This was the secret of the submission rendered outwardly, at least, as I have said, to the leaders' decisions in trade matters; it was why the men joined in whatever was going forward, and made use of expressions which did not truly represent or even misrepresented their real wishes and tendencies; it was why so many of them allowed themselves to be intimidated and over-borne in their opinions, chiefly evident, as we shall see presently, in intellectual and moral or religious matters. But it also led to actual violence. Thus I was told by

a workman who belonged to the Social-Democratic Co-operative Union of the place, and who was himself a social democrat of the average sort, but who liked to go his own way and who had his own opinions, that once owing to a great number of orders the management had decreed overtime work. Agitation followed on the part of the leading social democrats in the factory, and the word was given that no one was to obey this order, in spite of the obligatory clause in the factory regulations. Some of the men disobeyed in order to increase their earnings; upon which their tools were secretly taken away in order to compel them to idleness. Now this is terrorism pure and simple, and a peculiar light is thrown upon it from the fact that these very same terrorising agitators, according to my informant, had themselves stayed behind for the overtime work, after those influenced by them had refused to do so and had actually gone home. To be sure I cannot vouch for the truth of this story in detail, but that is not necessary; the fact that such a story could be told to me proves the presence of terrorism, whose workings I could myself often perceive, although more instinctively than by actual evidence. But one bit of evidence was clearly brought out at a meeting of the above-mentioned Co-operative Union, where, on an important question of internal administration, not only a motion but even an expression of opinion on the part of some of the more tolerant members was promptly disallowed and suppressed; a proceeding exactly the opposite of everything I saw in the meetings of our Campaign Club.

As to its essential scope and purport, the whole agitation looked not only to the spread of new political ideas and economic principles, but was aimed, and successfully aimed, at a revolution in all previous training, religious convictions, and standards of morality of the working classes in Germany. This is because the social democracy of to-day is not merely a new political party, or a new system of economics, or even both of these put together; it is a new conception of the world, and of life; it is the logical outcome of materialism and the practical application of the doctrine of a natural order of the universe substituted for that of

a moral and divine order. I do not undertake here to demonstrate this theoretically from the history, the documents, the party press of social democracy, or the development and character of its leaders hitherto. Such a task far exceeds the scope and aim of this little volume. But everyone who knows its history, who studies its publications, even slightly, who follows its newspapers, and watches with any attention the course and the interests of its guiding spirits, will concede without further discussion the truth of my statememt, which is, indeed, more and more widely recognised to-day. Yet to give one instance, I will remind my readers of the striking contrast between the efforts of the social democracy and those of the land tenure reformers under the leadership of Michael Flürsheim.[1] Here is a man who is as radical on every land question as the social democrats themselves are, urging, that is, the nationalisation of all land: he seeks to attain his end not only by literary means, but also, as they do, by political agitation through political and economic associations, yet who, in my opinion, is by no means a social democrat, because his political economic ideal has never been blended with any radical opposition to inherited traditions to Christianity and the Church, nor with any conscious attempts to change those principles of morality which have hitherto been observed and respected among our people. But this is beside the question. Here it is my task to support the truth of the assertion I have just made, from the practical experiences of my three months' life as a working man. To do this I shall have to prove that the effect of this many-sided and active agitation by social democracy has as yet been far less penetrating, less lasting, and above all, less fraught with danger to the political and economic views of the labouring class as I have known them, than to their religious convictions and their moral character. It may perhaps be said that the official organised agitation has sought rather to familiarise the minds of the working men with every aspect of the social and political axioms of the party, as

[1] An adherent in the main of Mr. Henry George. His principal work is "Der einzige Rettungsweg," which is dedicated to Mr. George.

they are set forth in the Eisenach programme, while the other, voluntary, unorganised, the agitation, so to speak, of chance and opportunity, has carried forward the real essence of social democracy, its materialistic attitude and point of view, and has covered a far wider field of life in this outlook than it has itself been conscious of. But it is most difficult to draw the line here sharply. As the social-democratic daily press has for its chief object the promulgation and defence of the official programme, while yet there breathes in every line the spirit of its own specific conception of life, so also, broadly speaking, the same tendencies may be seen throughout the whole of this double agitation ; the ground of each is continually occupied, in greater or less extent, by the other, and the one supplements and supports the other. And their interaction becomes swifter and more harmonious in proportion as the personality of their conductors is more firmly and consciously social-democratic, and as the whole social-democratic scheme, one-sided, but mighty in its unyielding one-sidedness, finds fuller and clearer expression in these personalities.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF MY FELLOW-WORKMEN.

THE first and most noteworthy result of the agitation I have described is that in Chemnitz and its neighbourhood, as I came to know them, the entire body of wage-earners is to-day so far involved with the social-democratic party as, more or less, to live in the atmosphere of its thought, and to see in it—the working men's party *par excellence*—its only influential and outspoken representative. The working man, as I saw him in daily intercourse, is penetrated, consciously or unconsciously, with the feeling that the interests of labour and capital are, as they stand at present, diametrically opposed: he is filled with desire for a compact and effective organisation of the masses to whom he belongs, and with longings for the advancement and elevation of the entire Fourth Estate which those masses constitute. Himself a child of the new era, full of ferment and theory, he, like his contemporaries, is possessed of all kinds of new interests and higher needs, bodily and mental, to the gratification of which he aspires; and he knows, he sees, he feels that these elemental impulses, these needs and aspirations, have hitherto found no other champion who is willing to satisfy them without reservation or self-seeking, than the party of social democracy.

And, therefore, to this party he belongs, although he may be in some respects at variance with it, although in some respects it may be even revolting to him. But of this I am sure: there is no existing authority strong enough, nor any intellectual appeal cogent enough, to separate him from it, or to wholly dissipate the ideas it has awakened in him and out of which in turn the party itself draws new life. It is for this reason that the young and

the old, the well-off and the ill-off, the married and the single, the learned and the unlearned, the thrifty and the wasteful, the industrious and the idle, the wise and the foolish, the prosperous and the outcast, the native and the foreign-born, all groups, all classes, all orders in the factory, down to a vanishing point, recognise themselves without distinction as social democrats, follow the party leaders and believe in them and their dicta as in a new gospel. More than once it has been said to me in the factory, in so many words: "What Jesus Christ has been in the past, Bebel and Liebknecht will be in the future." Here is the expression of the conviction that social democracy is, to-day, the wage-earning class itself; that they are identical or will become so, that however many and great may and must be the differences, the contradictions, the incongruities between them, their joys, their sorrows, their ideals are still the same.

For proof of this I may quote some perfectly spontaneous expressions taken at random from all kinds of working men, and all conveying the same sentiment. "Every one of us, to the last man, voted the social-democratic ticket." "Working men are all social democrats, and vote for social democrats." "Every workman is a social democrat." "I vote for my kind." And, especially sententious, "Everything here is social-democratic, even the machines." It is always the same feeling which finds expression, namely, that social democracy and the working class are necessarily one and the same thing. One hears plenty of talk, to be sure, which seems to contradict this. For instance, I have heard a number of men assert that only about half of the four or five hundred men in the works were social democrats. But the contradiction is only a seeming one; here were meant only such as came into especial prominence through their social-democratic views, particularly such as were active in social-democratic campaign clubs, trade unions, benefit companies or social organisations. In this sense certainly not nearly half the men could be called social democrats. But in the widest sense of the word, the overwhelming majority of my fellow-workmen were social democrats in intention and in feeling.

During my whole stay I could only hear of three men in our department of one hundred and twenty who were openly and confessedly anti-social democrats. Two of these were members of the Hirsch and Dancker Trade Union of Chemnitz, an association numbering about seventy members; the other was a good faithful fellow whose interest in religious matters was too absorbing, and whose family, consisting of peasants, was too conservative and prosperous to admit of his holding social-democratic convictions conscientiously and from an inner need. It was said of him that he was in the factory for his own pleasure and under no necessity of working. Besides these three men there were indeed a few others, who, so far as I could see, really had nothing in common with social democracy. But they kept their own counsel and preferred to leave their comrades in doubt as to their convictions. Innate timidity also, and not mere policy, was often, no doubt, the cause of their silence. Although their number is not to be estimated, I do not believe it was very large. At all events, these neutrals, together with the bold and outspoken antagonists of social democracy, were but a slender minority as against those of their comrades who were reckoned among social democrats as a matter of course, or who frankly acknowledged themselves to be such.

This does not mean, indeed, that each one of this majority was a clearly convinced social democrat, well grounded in the principles and programme of his party. On the contrary, this would be true of hardly three per cent., at the utmost of four per cent., of the whole number; it could be truly said only of the little knot of leaders and supporters of the agitation and their closest friends and pupils. These alone had read the party literature with any degree of thoroughness and intelligence; these alone knew and appreciated the entire official programme, its immediate demands no less than its ultimate and most radical aims. They were often ardent fanatics, who resolutely suppressed and silenced their own practical experience to the contrary, the traditions of their past, and the judgments of sound common sense; who had made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the

party programme—often with incredible labour and pecuniary sacrifices of every sort—until they were finally saturated with its ideas, lived only in and for them, and could only see and judge men and events through the medium of this programme. They were, for the most part, genuine, honest, German enthusiasts and idealists, who composed this inner circle of working men, many of them filled with boundless ambition and eagerness for action, but, so far as my observations went, only a few among them belonging to the class of ingrained egotists who seek their own personal advantage in everything. Here, in this small group, and here alone, are to be found the real principles and doctrines of social democracy clearly and succinctly expressed, its aims and purposes squarely recognised and steadfastly sought. Yet they expressed themselves on these questions less often and less openly than might have been expected.

But of such clear and definite conviction, social or political, there was no question among the vast remaining majority of social-democratic working men, who represented, rather, the most diverse and contradictory opinions, a patchwork of all shades and colours. There was no longer the strong suppression and effacement of practical experience derived from the former life and calling of each man, of the personal desires and hopes he had nourished, and the characteristics he had brought with him from his childhood's home in the days before he had become a social democrat. On the contrary, such experience, personal desires, early influences, were far oftener exceedingly intense and powerful, and strangely bound up in a connection, sometimes slight, and sometimes firm, with social-democratic ideals and teachings, which were themselves held in a manner far from definite, comprehensive, or methodical. Very few of this immeasurably larger circle had studied the party publications as the small group I have spoken of had, without exception, done, and, if at all, with far less patience and thoroughness. The political and economic views of social-democratic origin, which they did hold, were chiefly gained from short, half-digested articles in the local social-democratic journals, or sometimes from lectures and addresses at social

democratic meetings, or personal intercourse with keen-minded and enthusiastic companions. And according as one or the other of the above-named elements had the ascendancy and the deciding influence in this compound of forces, and according, also, to the intellectual capacity and the greater or less initiative of the individual, so were his social and political ideas more or less lucid, more or less consistent, more or less intelligent, but always a heterogeneous mass, which nowise coincided with the clear and steadily-pursued policy of the "normal" and "élite" social democrats; which, indeed, could not be made to fit any party pattern, and which found more or less frequent expression, sometimes gently, quietly, dispassionately, sometimes roughly, malignantly, insultingly. But although almost everyone of these people held thus of necessity a peculiar and individual attitude toward the social-democratic programme, and often embraced in their own programme the most widely different, even the most conservative, ideas, still they all felt themselves to be social democrats, and many a one among them firmly believed that his own incomplete and garbled views were exactly those of the party, and his own strange ideal the very ideal of social democracy. Under these circumstances it is simply impossible to make an exhaustive presentation of these confused and most diverse conceptions, often half expressed, or never brought to clear expression at all. Naturally I was myself unable to make myself acquainted with all of them, and I must, therefore, limit myself to the mention of such characteristics as were particularly striking.

On one very important point they were nearly all agreed. This was in relation to the ultimate radical aims of the social-democratic programme. I do not mean to say that they openly repudiated these, nor that they made a consistent opposition to them. But with the majority of these average social democrats, and especially with the more prudent, thoughtful men of practical experience and matured minds, neither official democratic republicanism, nor industrial communism could fairly be called popular. These were larger subjects, of which most men of their stamp could gain no real understanding, and for which they could

feel no hearty enthusiasm. But these, like many other issues of social democracy, the people accepted as something which belonged, and must belong, to the movement; and left it unconcernedly to the leaders to struggle with such incomprehensible problems, secretly convinced that their prophecies would never be fulfilled, and quite indifferent to their failure. For instance, a prosperous mechanic, without children, and therefore without anxiety for the future, a man in middle life, amiable and friendly, but a fanatical adherent of social democracy, said to me once, in so many words: "The future will never be what Bebel expects. But he has already changed his ideas, and he will change them again." Another equally shrewd, thoughtful, social democrat said to me among other things in the course of a long talk: "Do you know, I never read a social-democratic book and hardly ever a paper. I never used to trouble myself about politics, but now that I am married and have five mouths to feed, I have to think about things. But I keep my thoughts to myself; I don't care about red sashes, big hats, and that sort of thing. All that's no good. We don't at all want to be like the rich and the great. There must always be rich and poor. That doesn't come into our heads. But we want fairer and better regulations in the works and in the community, and I speak my mind about it whether it suits or not. But I will never do anything against the law." The more intelligent and self-confident of the men did not hesitate to proclaim their own particular views, even in opposition to the momentary issues of the party. Thus it was with a foreman, one of the oldest and most skilled in the department, whose attitude towards social democracy was very much that of the mechanic I have just quoted, who neither expected nor greatly desired the realisation of all its demands. Like many others, this man was not much edified by the official attitude of the party towards the question of the labour of women and children. Until lately, as is well known, the party managers have strongly urged that the entire social-democratic agitation should be brought to bear upon its prohibition, and that the labouring class should, so far as possible, voluntarily abstain from

it. "But that is nonsense," the foreman said. "If a man earns enough, he doesn't let his wife and children go into the works of his own accord. But if there is no money in the house, they have to help to get it as best they can; and they should not desire to diminish your earnings! It isn't true that the wage would go up, as they say; it might, perhaps, a very little, but not much. To make the damage good, it would have to be about doubled; then, to be sure, nobody need let his wife or child work. But who is going to ask the bosses to do that? I don't believe they could do it if they wanted to."

The point is not whether these expressions of opinion are relatively and economically right or wrong (in the case just quoted, of course we must consider them wrong), but the true point is found in the fact that skilled workmen, able and ready to think for themselves, although feeling themselves strongly bound to the social-democratic party, not only keep to their own opinions, but are not ashamed to speak them out quietly before their comrades, and at all events feel the need of settling questions on quite another basis than the phrases of a republican communistic order of society.

This large and wide-spread group, including the best workmen, is rather intensely occupied with the immediate, or even—in the case of such as are higher up in the scale of welfare and intelligence—with the remoter and more theoretical questions concerning their own industry, in which they have a direct interest, and where they can base a judgment on experience. Many, for instance, were continually bringing up the quite harmless question of fortnightly payments. These vehemently urged a weekly pay-day. I gave it as my opinion that it made no real difference, but this view met with little favour. They could foresee their needs for one week; could keep their money together for that time and spend it properly and suitably; impossible to do so with a fortnightly wage! There were always large expenses then, that took up too much of the money, and at the end of the two weeks a man must be either completely out of funds or living on credit. Certainly this was not very conclusive reasoning, but it furnishes,

alas! another proof of the helplessness of our working class in matters of domestic economy. For others, again, the problem of a more justly apportioned wage was the very pivot of their political and social philosophy. They are perfectly in the right. It is a regrettable fact, of which I had evidence over and over again, that there is no just system of gradation in the valuation and remuneration of the different trades, and, within the trades, of the individual workmen. This, in my opinion, as well as the total neglect of any attempt to regulate the mutual relations of the petty officers and the men, is to be traced to the fatal economic principle of *laisser aller*, and to that disdain for the human unit, which a blind absolutism considers unworthy of its notice, while it neither perceives, nor indeed suspects that it is morally pledged to introduce order among these units, and that its failure to do so will always be a source of great and lasting discontent. Thus it was customary for the vice-hands and blacksmiths, skilled workmen, to be paid much less, on the average, for their heavy and fatiguing work, which demanded a high degree of intelligence, than the wage of many of the machine-tenders, workers at the drill-press, turners and planers.

Furthermore, among these latter, as I have already said, the men employed at the large turning and drilling machines, where the labour was not severe, received a disproportionately higher wage than those who tended machines of smaller or smallest calibre, where an unremitting attention was required. I need not speak of the manual labourers. The removal of these grievances was the most urgent demand of many among our social democrats. They insisted upon a juster consideration, and in common, with a large body of workmen, upon a rate of payment proportioned to the length of service in the same industry, if possible, a certain system of promotion, as from manual labourer to workman at a small machine, and gradually to larger and larger up to the largest, which were not tended, as the case actually was, by men trained for the work. An approach to such a scale of promotion did in fact exist in our factory, but it was not the thing aimed at.[1]

[1] The factory manager says, in regard to this: "It is a rule with us gradu-

For my part, I should find it harder to understand why our directors—and I suppose it is the same elsewhere—so entirely disregarded the wishes of their employés in this respect, were it not for the fact that they have not the faintest conception of the fulfilment of moral duties. Yet it would be greatly to their interest. It would cost them a sum hardly worth mentioning, although so much hangs upon it for themselves, and it would enable them to draw upon a much larger, more permanent, and therefore more conservative constituency of labour. Others, again, of our comrades widened the horizon of their thought beyond the questions of our own establishment, until it embraced general economic problems, but in the way, to be sure, in which social democracy formulated them. In this they were helped by the facts previously noticed, which did not escape their keen observation, *i.e.*, that the entire industry, as far as they could see it, was organised throughout, socially and socialistically, in the form of a collective production of artistic wholes, as it was also in the reciprocal relations among themselves, and between themselves and their immediate superiors during work. To this was added the fact that the real united management, the activity of the mercantile branch of such a large establishment, as well as the entire technical department of engineers and designers, was almost entirely out of sight, so that these simple men could all the more easily come to the erroneous conclusion that *their* toil was the real, the important and essential work; that *they* built the machines, that *they* were the actual creators and producers, that *they*, the workmen, really represented the factory. But although their thoughts and dreams soared often to incalculable regions, these men were not saturated with communistic principles, and they did not have any really distinct understanding of the nature and consequences of such principles. Rarely did they share the miserable, unpatriotic, *political* stand-

ally to increase, up to a certain maximum, the wages of all labourers, even of those who are employed upon the commonest tasks, when they are conscientious and diligent; as is well known, our factory pays the highest wages." This agrees with my remarks at the beginning of Chapter II. and elsewhere. —The Author.

point of the leaders and *élite* social democrats, whose prate of "humanity" leads to the sickliest cosmopolitanism, and to the misconception and rejection of all true patriotism and patriotic obligations.

I think I may emphatically repeat that of this last worst form of social-democracy as a constituent of their deepest conviction, there is at present very little among the average social democrats as a mass, even in the more active and zealous of them; and that on the contrary they manifest a surprising affection for the German Fatherland, the Emperor and the army. However difficult or even impossible it was for me to obtain a clear perspective of the people's feelings on account of the confusion and vagueness of their ideas, I can, I think, vouch for the truth of the following statements in regard to their attitude towards the army, the Emperor and the King of Saxony, towards revolution, and, finally, towards Bismarck.

According to my note-books, I must, twenty times or more, have talked over military matters of all kinds, with all sorts of people, sometimes by chance, sometimes by intention, sometimes much, sometimes little. To begin with the inn. There was a stone-cutter there, of about my own age, with whom I became very intimate. He was, of course, a social democrat of the ordinary average type that I have described, and he was, into the bargain, a thoroughly good fellow, without a trace of bitterness, and one who had not outgrown his early influences. He had served in a Thuringian battalion at the court of one of the petty princes, about which, and the parades in which he had taken part, and the officers in command, he was never tired of telling me in our walks together. He had been particularly impressed by the fact that his own prince, being of lower rank in the service, had yielded precedence to the old Field-Marshal General *v.* Blumenthal who came once to inspect the garrison. Blumenthal was his ideal; he described him to me in glowing colours, and with vast enthusiasm. He seemed to be peculiarly susceptible to the influence of gay uniforms and of well-made, handsome officers.

In the factory, too, everyone remembered fondly his time of service. Wherever there was a group of men, if the conversation turned by any chance upon it there was an outburst of enthusiasm. They rehearsed with satisfaction the hardships of the service; the hot summer days on the parade-ground and the cold winter nights on guard. Many of them still regarded their own regiments with especial pride. And yet, those who thus spoke, old and young, were one and all social democrats. Among the young fellows there was a fine handsome mechanic, eighteen years old and very ambitious, who was determined to enter the mounted artillery in Riesa as a four years' volunteer. He was not to be dissuaded, although some of the older men often tried—and to my thinking very properly—to turn his purpose, and to show him the dark side of four years of military life. We had also a number of recruits who had just been enlisted and were to join the army in the autumn, among them an Austrian. All of them, particularly the latter, were waiting like children with a joyous impatience, not unmixed with some natural tremors, for the moment of their summons, and everyone was already proud of the grenadier or guard regiment in which he was to be enrolled. The Austrian had already put on a strictly military manner, and his greeting to everybody consisted merely of putting his hand to his cap in true military style. They, too, were all more or less "sozialisch" as one of them put it. Indeed, it was the future trooper, a lively young fellow, who originated the famous expression: "We are all social democrats here, even the machines." There was also a so-called "ten weeker" in the works, a substitute in the reserve corps. He, too, was to begin his term of service in less than a month, and he, too, in several conversations that I had with him, expressed only a certain secret elation and satisfaction. He rather piqued himself upon the fact that he had now to economise in order to have something to the fore during his ten weeks of service! Again, I was once standing with five social democrats, when the talk fell on military matters, especially the manœuvres about Chemnitz. This was the signal for a multitude of anecdotes, delightedly told, most of them personal from the standpoint of

spectator or assignee of a billet. One of the hand-workers in the factory, formerly a tailor, had served in Dresden in the artillery, and often spoke of this time in Dresden as the gayest and happiest part of his life. I went to see him one evening when he was sick, and he made his wife fetch for us his own and his comrades' photographs and the battery taken as a group, and showed them to me with evident enjoyment, giving me at the same time a detailed account of the history of each one of these defenders of the Fatherland. And once, during work, two packers, gruff, weather-beaten old fellows, full of rough jokes, but very amusing if one knew how to take them, said to me, with extraordinary emphasis: "We are soldiers, body and soul, and we shall stay so till we die." I could quote many more remarks to the same purpose which I heard from the men at breakfast or in the "kneipen" in the evenings. Even the broken-down vice-hand who was with us only a week, who took his advance-wage on the very first day, and tried to borrow from all of us without success, and whom I had recognised as an old comrade in my own service, heartily enjoyed talking to me about the officers of the regiment, the quarters, and all the other things which had been of interest to us then. To be sure, the men often criticised those officers who had dealt severely with them. A young mechanic, a social democrat, had read Abel's famous pamphlet, and said that he agreed with it; but, even in his case, as in that of the others who had hard things to say of their officers, the whole impression that I received was of a private grudge against an individual, or a single instance, and not an aversion to the institution itself.

Again, two workmen were once discussing the social democratic demand for the abolition of the standing army. One of them, who had not served, defended it, but modified his defence by saying that of course it could not be done immediately and all at a time, but must be brought about gradually. The other disputed this, and declared that the dissolution of the army and the disbanding of hundreds of thousands of young and vigorous men would result in the ruin of the whole wage-earning population, the reserve of labour would swell to monstrous proportions, wages

would be very greatly lessened, and we workmen would all have to starve together.

I came upon a strange idea in two other social democrats, only one of whom belonged to our factory. It was at the Children's Festival in Seigmar. They were talking of strikes, and the one whom I did not know said suddenly: "Yes, if the officers will only strike! It is already beginning to come to a head. That's the only reason that Government raised their pay lately—to make them contented. Besides," he added, "it is already breaking out in England and Spain, and so forth."

Only once did I hear a really bitter feeling expressed toward the army, and this was at dinner in our restaurant. The expression came from a gloomy, taciturn man, with the face of a fanatic. He was reading aloud from some paper to a companion an article in which the captain was called the father and the sergeant the mother of his company. The reader became violently excited, and broke out into expressions the reverse of complimentary as to the fatherly and motherly qualities of the two officers—highly problematic, in fact! But this workman was one of the rabid *élite* social democrats, from whom no other opinion was to be expected. In every other instance I found, as I have said, none but friendly feelings.

A peculiar kindness for the army was to be found, naturally, in those among us who had served in the French campaign. Three such I hold in distinct recollection—one had been an uhlan, one a chasseur, and one in an infantry regiment. All three talked proudly of that year in France, with the epic breadth and humour, the vigour and realism, which make such descriptions so original and so delightful from the lips of the common people. The chasseur, a worker at the drill-press, longed to attend a reunion of the chasseurs and sharpshooters of Saxony, to be shortly held in Meissen, but this, with a troop of children and a wage of twenty-seven or twenty-nine pfennigs the hour, was, naturally, not to be thought of. Finally, I must allude to a fact which does not seem to me without its importance—the presence, namely, of pictures of soldiers and soldier-life, often of the most primitive sort and

the crudest colours, which were everywhere pasted on the work-benches or beside the work-places of individuals. It seems to me to be a clear proof of the affection with which the German army is regarded by the wage-earning class of a great German industrial centre, in spite of more than twenty years of social-democratic agitation.

I attribute this favourable aspect of the case less to any idea that this class of society, as well as the nobility and some of the bourgeoisie, is proud and happy to be allowed to serve its king in the army, than to the delight of the common people in gay uniforms, and the fresh, free, careless life which the vigorous and light-hearted youth of our labouring classes lead at this time, and usually at no other; and to the fact, no less important, that his time of service is to the factory hand the longest, the most complete and the most brilliant change from the dull monotony of factory life. In this way I explain also the obvious fact that, except in the case of great wretchedness and need, the men took a certain amount of pleasure in the exercises of the reserve corps, because they thus refresh in common, for a few short weeks, the memory of the good old time. And this fact gains still more in moral significance, when we remember that for people of the labouring class exercise in the reserve corps has always meant the entire cessation of earnings, and, in consequence, a far greater sacrifice for the Fatherland, than is the annual two months' service for sons of well-to-do parents who are officers in the Reserve Corps or wish to become so.

Army clubs were twice discussed by the men in my hearing, both times in an exceedingly interesting and instructive way. The question was whether social democrats could be members of an army club, and it appeared that there were three perfectly distinct opinions among the speakers. The first was that they must be honest and true to their colours under all circumstances. It was a fixed fact that army clubs were pledged, officially, to exclude social-democratic members. Every such member, therefore, ought to have sufficient pride to leave the club of his own motion; but never to join, so that there should be nothing

underhanded, and no danger of being finally kicked out. Two others who had never been soldiers disputed this view zealously, and presented a contrary one. "Every social democrat who has been in the service ought to feel it his duty to join the clubs and to see to it that they gradually become thorough going social democratic organisations, and that all the members previously of a different way of thinking should become social democrats." These were both young men, full of initiative, who had in mind the army club of our suburb, the great majority of whose members were out-spoken social democrats, proclaiming themselves such on every opportunity, and which, in consequence, had been deprived of its affiliation with the Saxon Alliance of army clubs as well as of the right to quarter the royal arms on its flag. The third opinion, eliciting scorn and disapproval in both conversations, was that of a group of older men who represented views more moderate, but emphatically opposed to both the others. They thought the matter should stand thus: "We are both soldiers and social democrats, and both heartily. The army clubs are military societies, but also, and chiefly, mutual benefit societies, and we have paid our share into their treasuries for long years. We have therefore a claim to the enjoyment of their privileges, and we ought to be allowed to remain members. But since their constitutions debar us from the politics of social democracy, it would be absurd and foolhardy on our part to talk about them or to attempt any propaganda of them. Better for us to keep our views to ourselves, and say nothing about them." In neither conversation was there any approach to agreement of these three opinions. Each group held stoutly to the truth of its own view, and denounced the others as totally false. This shows, at least, a diversity of guiding principles in the political creeds of ordinary social democrats. In the first opinion we have the abstract ideal, insisting on an open visor and a distinction sharply drawn; in the second, that faith in agitation and propaganda, which prompts to rashness of action; while in the third, the absence of considerations of country demanded by the social democratic party, struggles with the patriotic loyalty of the old

soldier, and motives of self-interest further complicate the situation. I believe that these three ways of regarding the question were to be found all through our labouring circles, the men having been obliged to look into it in consequence of the state of affairs in the army club of our own suburb; which of the three was most widely held I could not tell.

Here I may speak of the athletic club, which, in my opinion, did good work in the quarter. It was not a very old club, but its numbers were relatively large. Young mechanics, locksmiths, and weavers belonged to it, as well as clerks, book-keepers, and journalists. I met there also a young draughtsman, one of the upper employés of our factory. In short, almost every occupation of our suburb was represented in the club, and, of course, it was not yet wholly social democratic or socialistic. All the members seemed on very good terms with each other. The club was thus a neutral ground, where every shade of political opinion and inclination existed peacefully side by side, and, under the rules of the club, without discussion. This made it a place of mutual meeting on a personal basis, quite removed from narrow party prejudice. And it is in this that I see the great ethical importance of all athletic clubs which exist and flourish on these same principles in a mixed population like our own. From this standpoint I place them even higher than the army clubs, which are, in fact, to-day partisan "loyal" associations and centres of anti-social-democratic opposition.

The result of my observations of the feeling of the people for the German Emperor and the King of Saxony is equally satisfactory. It was, to be sure, particularly difficult to obtain a precise insight into the situation here. Everyone was on his guard against a treasonable expression, for no one wholly trusted his neighbour. I believe, too, that a large fraction of the population is quite indifferent to both Empire and Emperor, as to so many other things. They regard them with neither love nor hatred, but with no interest whatever, and are usually too much occupied with their own narrow circumstances or their petty pleasures to think of them with any enthusiasm, if, indeed, they think of them

at all. There were certainly others, however, who, affected by the extreme partisan attitude of the "élite" social democrats, wavered inwardly between like and dislike, between the old patriotism and the new cosmopolitanism. But to the great majority of even the typical party-followers, the Emperor still remained a thoroughly sympathetic and representative figure. It was not only that they listened to praise of him without opposition, without gloomy looks or morose words, for this would be no proof in itself; but I have often heard unqualified expressions of approval from their own lips: "The Emperor is all right!" Once, at the Children's Festival, where the people were quite at their ease with each other, this idea was expressed very clearly: "Emperor William has the best intentions, but he can't do as he wants to. They have got him in a tight place, and make him do what they say. But it is to be hoped he will get his own way by-and-by." I heard there also the common regret for Emperor Frederick's death: "Too bad! how different it would all have been if he had only reigned for five years!" I was once told by a rather out-at-elbows butcher, with whom I was taking a stroll: "Emperor Frederick, he thought more of the working men than of all the rest." There, Emperor Frederick is still the popular hero. The gentle Hohenzollern, even in his grave, is a peace-maker between the throne and the people, and a blessing to both. Here and there a picture of him, as well as of the reigning Emperor, is to be seen gummed to the work-benches. I found in several families also, patriotic biographies of Frederick III. and William I. in the cheap, well-known penny pamphlet form, although the heads of these families ranged themselves openly with the social-democratic party. I shall record, later, an astounding conversation between two of our own workmen, social democrats both, about Bismarck. Both of these men, however much they cursed Bismarck, expressed full confidence in the Emperor. When I told them, during the talk, that I did not believe the Emperor would maintain the socialist law, even in case of another attempt on his life, they both emphatically agreed with me. Another time, one of the workmen peremptorily dis-

claimed the charge of hostility to the Empire. "We are not opposed to the Government and the Emperor, but only to their false friends." Another typical social democrat, with whom I often talked over politics, and whose well-thought-out opinions I valued, had been for nine years in our factory, and knew his mates there pretty thoroughly. He once said to me quite frankly and of his own motion: "I am not in the least against the Emperor or our own King. To be sure, I haven't seen either of them, but for our King I would go through fire and water. And there are plenty more like me among us." This wide-spread friendliness of feeling was the result, partly, of the deep regard for the monarchy which has been, for ages, rooted in the minds of the German and Saxon race; partly, of the Emperor's genuine desire for social reforms, of whose sincerity the workmen are convinced, even though unwillingly; and, finally, of the very limited anti-monarchical agitation of social democracy, the free movement of which has been restricted in exactly this direction. True, it must not be supposed that this favourable inclination towards the monarchy has any essential resemblance to that earlier submissiveness unto death, which trembled in deepest fear and reverence before his all-powerful majesty. In the working class, no more than in any other, is there found the old blind and slavish surrender to authority. In place of this—a far finer thing, in my opinion—there exists a wide-spread respect for the "First Servant of the State," whose existence is an acknowledged necessity, whose intentions are believed honest, conscientious, friendly, unpartisan, and just, who is suspected, rather than known, to be not an omnipotent sovereign but a ruler much restricted in his powers by the checks and pressure of opposing interests. From all this I am convinced that social-democratic agitation will hardly succeed in uprooting this reasonable feeling of the people, if only the Emperor will continue, as hitherto, to show his just approval of the working men and their well-grounded demands, and also, so far as he can, to procure their realisation and fulfilment.

Having said so much, it will be easy to believe that by far the largest part of my workfellows in Chemnitz have no thought what-

ever of violent and bloody revolution. For the truth of this assertion, I have as proof not only my distinct general impression, but numberless direct and straightforward assurances of my mates, who vouched moreover for their soundness. On that excited Sunday evening of the festival of our Campaign Club, when hot words were exchanged with the Americanised Barvarian and his friend the brewery director, when one social-democratic song after another was sung, and the people's hearts and lips were really overflowing, several men assured me: "We workmen do not want a revolution. We are far too civilised for that. We want to gain our ends by peaceful means; as much as we can now, and our children after us the rest." They who spoke thus were young men. In the very beginning of my factory life another one said to me: "We have not the smallest idea of being revolutionists; at least, no one has in Chemnitz and the neighbourhood." And another: "That we workmen want to bring about a revolution not even *they up yonder* seriously believe." And one of the two rabid social democrats and Bismarck haters whom I have already mentioned, said to me while discussing the repeal of the socialist law: "The Emperor has seen that everything goes on peacefully and quietly without the socialist law. There will only be a revolution if our cause is forcibly put down." Again, the one foreman whom I have often quoted, a very independent and practical man, said: "We should be the greatest blockheads if we tried to bring about a revolution and destroy the factories; it would be too silly, and would hurt us more than anyone." A weaver, foremost in the movement, a powerful man and famous gymnast, said to me: "Our magnates would be very glad if we would get up a revolution; but we won't give them the pleasure under any circumstances." And finally, in a secret session, the chairman of a meeting once declared emphatically with the silent assent of all present: "We in this trade union do not want to be destroyers; we want rather to set a good example, and to strive only for bettering the condition of our class." Only once did I meet with an expression which could be interpreted otherwise. "The upper classes ought to meet us with more

sympathy; then there would be none of this bitter feeling and opposition. But if they won't do this, then we shall finally be like the hungry man who can't get anything to eat; he takes what he needs." [1]

I believe that this abundance of verbal testimony, almost all of it from pretty staunch social democrats, will be enough to establish among my readers my own firm conviction, that the labouring population of Chemnitz as I knew it in the factory resists with all its powers, to-day, the idea of a bloody revolution. They know, indeed, that the effectual improvement of their condition, which is the object of effort and desire on the part of every one among them, is not to be secured without a struggle. They understand, and too often they feel in their own persons, the irrepressible conflict of interest between themselves and the capitalist class. But they see it to-day as a natural necessity, and only in specific cases as the fault of the employer of labour. They distinguish between the person and the thing, as a rule, and they do not want a struggle of brute force, but the manly and firm but law-abiding opposition of two organised parties in a free state. Not the number of fists is to decide it, but the number of votes, and the might of truth. Nevertheless, I do not for a moment deny the *danger* of a revolution. But this danger lies not in the intention of the people, their political and social aims, but in the always possible refusal or delay of a fundamental social reform, and above everything in the contemptible new philosophy, which, favoured by the present internal crisis of the Church, and by our neglected industrial and social conditions, has been widely diffused among our people to-day in the train of social-democratic agitation. Here only, and not in any specifically formal economic education of the workman in purely socialistic and communistic ideas, lies the peculiarly great danger, the peculiarly ominous result of the whole party agitation up to the present. The following chapter will treat this subject at length.

In connection with the idea of a revolution which I have just

[1] "Er maŭst sich was er braŭcht." Observe that there is no idea of violence even here; the verb means only to pilfer, properly to mouse.

discussed, another observation which I made is not uninteresting; namely, that its allied doctrine, the social-democratic phrase of the brotherhood of nations, had practically found as yet no fruitful soil whatever. On the contrary, a state of feeling exactly the reverse could be daily studied in Chemnitz, where by reason of the nearness of the Bohemian frontier, hundreds of Tzechs (nicknamed "Seffs") were employed, chiefly in the building trade. Between these and the native Germans there was a general indifference and aversion. They were indeed, valuable sources of profit to many workmen's families, and they were not ill-treated, but they were always scorned. They even had their own dance-halls, which our people seldom visited on account of the rough manners there, and the two nationalities not infrequently came to blows. Even the German-Bohemian in our factory suffered from this dislike to their countrymen. At all events there was not the smallest sign of affinity between the Tzechs and our own people.

On the other hand it was distressing, although not wholly surprising, to see how successful the social-democratic agitation has been in exciting the feeling of the entire wage-earning class, from the bitterest social democrat to the most inoffensive against Prince Bismarck. No man is more thoroughly, bitterly, fiercely, hated than the founder of the German Empire. There was but one voice, one sentiment, in regard to him. "Bismarck is the greatest enemy of the working man." "Bismarck is a fraud," are literal expressions which I have heard more than once. Half a dozen of us were standing together once before a great iron plate into which I had to bore some holes with a hand-drill. Someone, all of a sudden, wrote Bismarck's name in chalk on the plate, and told us to guess what it meant. He then solved his riddle himself. It made two sentences, each letter of Bismarck's name, read backward and forward, being the initial letter of a word in these two sentences. The first was, "*B*ismarck *I*st *S*einer *M*ajestät *A*llmächtigster *R*eichs-*K*anzler" ("Bismarck is his Majesty's most omnipotent imperial chancellor"), and the other, *K*ein *R*eich *A*rbeitet *M*it *S*o *I*ntelligenten *B*eamten" (No State works with such intelligent officials"). "Yes," retorted another,

"Bismarck is a man of accomplishments." "How so?" I asked. "He has accomplished the heaviest taxes," was the reply. Here in both cases was little wit but much hatred. On another occasion I was talking with a workman about the first of May, recently past. The workman assured me that neither before nor after the "first" had a single word about a demonstration been spoken. "All the same, we were threatened with very severe measures, and not alone by the bosses, but by the Government too. Bismarck is to blame for it; he has made all the mischief. To be sure he is gone now—a good thing it is—but his hangers-on and agents are very powerful still with the Government." Still more significant was the conversation which I overheard between two workmen, and to which I have already referred.

A. "What will Bismarck do now?"

B. "He will stay comfortably in Friedrichsruh and perhaps plan a new attempt on the Emperor's life as in 1878."

A. "What do you mean by that?"

B. "Why, that's clear enough! Neither Nobiling nor Hödel was a social democrat, one was a Liberal, the other a Stöcker man. Both were set on by Bismarck so that he might pass the socialist law."

A. "And why should he think of such a thing now?"

B. "So as to prevent the repeal of the law on the first of October."

However idiotic this whole conversation may have been, it expressed the utmost degree of distrust, contempt, and hatred, which does not seem to be moderated by a single friendly judgment of the prince.

From the great mass of average social democrats whom I have described I think one especially important group detaches itself, whose members, I have good reasons to believe, are everywhere steadily on the increase. This group was composed of practical, prudent, sensible, earnest and enlightened men in middle life who had intelligently studied the fundamental, economic and political problems of social democracy, and who gave their adherence to its teachings firmly if not unreservedly. But in the purely politi-

cal labour agitation of the party, these men took little or no share, and as a consequence, energetic as they were, they threw themselves into work which lay close at hand and promised immediate practical result and satisfaction, in Trade Unions, in committees for the sick and liability insurance funds, in free benefit societies, and, above all, into active work in their local politics, naturally with the firm intention of acting in accordance with social-democratic principles, and in the interests of social democracy, that is, of the working men. Meanwhile, however much they meant to realise social-democratic ideas, they were compelled to deal with concrete facts, to learn to seek actual ends. These actual ends and facts begin to be interesting in themselves, they become more important than the theoretic and distant aims of the party, and they educate these men, who still remain sincere social democrats, into really practical, political, and social, activity. Thus there is created an effectual counter-agent to the Utopian dreams to which they gave themselves wholly over in first entering on politics, and thus, let us hope, will be averted all danger that social democracy may become a visionary and childish party, effecting no actual reforms and making itself a laughing-stock.

This result of my observations which I have just given, and to support which I could bring plenty of proof from an attentive study of the latest development of the social democratic movement, which aimed to bring about changes in the conditions of the mine operatives, was forced upon me in a very clear and convincing manner at one of the meetings of our Social-Democratic Campaign Club. On that evening we had a lecture, chiefly for the information of the members, from the editor[1] of the *Social-Democratic Press* in Chemnitz, upon the Old Age and Invalid Insurance Act, not yet in force. The subject was, on the whole, scientifically treated. Two conclusions were reached—that the new Act was in many respects insufficient, and by no means a panacea for the wage-earner's troubles, or a complete solution of the labour problem, and also that they must not take alarm at

[1] Editor no longer.

this, but must accept what was now offered to them, and at the same time work hard for gradual amendments to the Act. He ended by saying that there must be no more useless remonstrance and grumbling. In spite of everything there was a good sound kernel to the Labour Insurance Acts, and it must be their chief task to get rid of the shell. Thus he courageously expressed a feeling very general among the working men, but which rarely ventured into the light of day after the social-democratic party had pronounced its official dictum concerning the insurance legislation as it stood. To-day working men gratefully acknowledge the plainly evident benefits of these Acts, although they take them as matters of course. If they are complained of in any wise, so far as I could see, it was only in regard to particular defects, like the three days deduction from the beginning of every illness, or else on account of difficulties of administration, for which those entrusted with the details of execution were alone to blame. One case which came to my knowledge during a visit to a sick comrade had especially irritated him and his family. It was the case of a Bohemian girl, speaking but little German, who had lodged in this family during the preceding summer, at work—as it often happens in Chemnitz—on a building. She was taken ill, and the physician who was called, instead of treating her, made haste to send her home to her well-to-do parents as speedily as might be. This was very displeasing to her landlady, who had taken good care of her. She looked into the matter, and found that this girl, as well as a great number of other working women, had never been reported at the Sick Insurance Office. The builder, her employer, and the physician of the Sick Insurance Fund, shared equally in the blame and the—profit ! so said my informant. But I cannot vouch for the truth of the story. In the factory the election of representatives for the Sick Insurance Board took place most quietly and simply, exciting no notice whatever. For example, a bulletin on the door of the factory announced one day that a representative for a certain specified trade must be chosen. At the hour appointed a large wooden box, locked, and provided with a slot in a very primitive fashion, was passed from hand to

hand among the voters; in a half-hour the whole affair was over, the box opened in presence of the commissioned workmen, and, next day, the result announced by a bulletin in the same place.

Precisely the same friendly feeling towards the Insurance Acts was shown in a very gratifying way at a largely attended meeting of our Campaign Club. True, let me repeat, dissenting voices on the part of those who subscribed entirely to the official social-democratic opinion were not wanting; but the lecturer's point of view was that of the majority. The long discussion finally narrowed down to an obstinate controversy between the lecturer and his supporters who advocated the government insurance, and the few adherents of the social-democratically conducted free benefit societies. Among the advocates of these was one who defended them ardently because he said it had been his experience in a small manufacturing town in the Erz mountains that the working men representatives on the Board of Directors of the Government Insurance sat in submissive silence before their employers in committee meetings, and allowed themselves to be used for the latter's profit and advantage, without a word of opposition, like so many dumb beasts. This was vehemently contradicted by some of the members who had served on such mixed committees ever since the acts had gone into operation. They protested that they had never allowed themselves to be so treated, but on the contrary, whenever it had been possible or necessary, that they had advocated the interests of the working men manfully and energetically, and in accordance with genuine social-democratic principles, and always with good results. "If we only approach the bosses in the right way, with reasons, they usually come to see into it, and go with us against their own mates." "Yes, that's it," broke in a clever speaker of long experience; "it has happened that we have voted against payment of damages in some cases, while the bosses have voted for it. But, of course, you have to look into the matter and stick to facts; don't try to get ahead, but be square. And that's what the bosses are, at least a great many of them. And that way the acts are a good thing, and you can get a great deal more by

them than you can by the free benefit funds of the social democrats. Of course, we have got to try to improve them all the time, and to make them more favourable to us, and we must stick to social-democratic principles, and that we can do. But as things are now, it is only the Government and not the free funds that have any life in them, and they have the future before them; it would be foolishness not to stand by them to the end." Several others followed him in the same strain. The discussion became so animated that it was not ready to come to an end at midnight, and when the meeting finally broke up, it was renewed on the way home by those who had been especially involved in it, and for a good half-hour I heard it continued, when the disputants' ways lay no longer together, at the corner of the street where I lived. What I find particularly valuable in this circumstance is, first, the evidence of an actual relation of confidence in a given case between the workmen and their employers, and, second, that social democrats here discussed practical issues and stood for them. In this particular I praise also the advocates of the free benefit funds. For while these latter busy themselves with organising and administering such funds with their investments and securities, with the care concerning financial risk, and with final success, they, too, as well as those working men who are in the official boards of insurance, are compelled to turn their whole attention from shadowy Utopias to tangible problems taxing their utmost capacity; in my eyes a most conspicuous and hopeful step in advance. This holds equally good to-day—and the future may show it in even greater degree—of the public administration of the towns in which some members of our Campaign Club had developed real executive power. Here also were to be seen the social-democratic convictions and aims for whose realisation everyone was working according to his age, ability, experience and character. And here, again, it is fortunate that the difficulties and embarrassments which often attend the administration of a community's funds, force them to accomplish their ends and realise their ideals, if at all, slowly, step by step, with thoroughness of detail, working out every case, and adjust-

ing and conforming themselves to views and convictions of men differing from their own. From this standpoint something similar may also be said, not so convincing, perhaps, but very hopeful, about the efforts of the workmen who are engaged in the newest phase of the movement of social democrats for changes in mining. But I prefer to say nothing that cannot be substantiated by illustrations drawn from my personal experience in the factory.

Over against this great mass of social-democrats of the usual type whom I have been trying to describe, there is another large group of working men, not less important. It includes, roughly speaking, all those who have no real political or social convictions of their own, and who take no pains to arrive at any, but who nevertheless call themselves social-democrats, and more than that, know and feel themselves as such. They seldom look inside a social-democratic publication, they do not frequent social-democratic meetings, they do not crave social-democratic conversation. But for all that, they subscribe wholly to the social-democratic programme. They are either too frivolous and pleasure-loving, or too unintelligent and incapable, too indolent and cowardly, or —saddest of all—too constantly depressed and anxious, to occupy themselves with the question in the abstract. They vote as social democrats, but they give themselves otherwise very little concern about the party in which, above all else, they behold the expression of their own discontent. They have no clear conceptions about anything, but only vague desires, and bitter hearts, and a longing that their condition, due partly to others, and partly to themselves, may be changed for the better as speedily as possible. They are often the worst kind of brawlers and roughs, the true ragged proletariat as the word was first used. But they are often, also, gentle, saddened, helpless creatures, incapable of the smallest harm, upon whose heads the raging waves of the economic storm beat without defence. Among them are subjects for houses of correction as well as for Christian bands of workmen. All trades and all ages are represented among them, but perhaps young people between sixteen and twenty are most numerous of all. According to all my observations, the majority of young people

are without any kind of clear or defined political or social opinions, without even the social-democratic inclinations which are supposed to be the usual ones. The chief reason for this, at least among the groups of working men whom I studied, is to be found in the unbridled love of excitement and pleasure, on the part of the young men, and in the ease with which it can be gratified. Their Sundays, afternoon and evening, are usually spent in the dance-halls; week-day evenings, so far as possible, with their sweethearts, or in excursions together; the best of them are engrossed in musical clubs, fire-engine companies, or athletics. In consequence they have neither time nor inclination, strength nor opportunity, to deal with difficult political problems. Only after marriage, when they feel the stress and seriousness of life, do they begin, usually, to occupy themselves with such matters. But the young unmarried men—they are not many—who, in contrast to most of their contemporaries, do interest themselves early in social and political questions, fling themselves into the work with all the fiery impetuosity of youth, and become, as I have said, the best henchmen of the local agitators.

This third group has one important characteristic, very strongly marked; namely, a constant eye to its own interest. Let its individual members be never so well drilled, let the moral pressure be never so strong, they would yet fling social democracy to the winds, if they themselves were not to profit by it. It was these men, above all others in the factory, on whom the authority of the social-democratic leaders most lightly sat.

It is true that they shared this quality with a great many of the members of the second group as I have described it, or even, indeed, of the first group of the "élite" social democrats. But with the latter, intellectually stronger, the motives of disloyalty to principles were perhaps better grounded; at all events they were not so low and unscrupulous, but were the result of much reflection, often of long inward struggle. But be this as it may, in all the small questions of every-day affairs, which arose during my stay in the factory, there was never any heed of the dictatorial and uncompromising doctrines and principles of the party; there

was none of the staunch fidelity and resolve, so often praised in stormy assemblies where the waves of social-democratic enthusiasm ran high, but, to the despair of the party Hotspurs, the decisive considerations, even with the ideally inclined and serious among the men, were personal experience in the past, timid or prudential calculations, a too-certain knowledge of the limitations of their power, the thought of wife and child, nay, considerations of comfort, and the small interests of the present hour.

This was made strikingly evident on one occasion when there was an attempt to organise a permanent working men's committee of representation in the factory. The whole affair is so interesting from more sides than one, and so instructive in view of the present discussion of labour commissions, that I wish to give a detailed account of the establishment of this so-called Working Men's Board of Representation. It does not, indeed, place our managers in a very favourable light, yet, appearances to the contrary, I believe that they acted to the best of their knowledge, honestly and in good faith.

I had not been long in the works, when one day there suddenly appeared on the outer door of the factory a bulletin, as follows :—

"In order to learn the views and the wishes of our operatives in regard to factory rules and regulations, it is proposed to elect a committee of six persons to represent the whole.

"Everyone over twenty-one years of age shall be entitled to a vote.

"Candidates for the committee of representation must be at least thirty years of age, and must have been employed in this factory for at least three consecutive years.

"The voting shall proceed as follows: Before next Friday evening each workman entitled to a vote shall write the names of six candidates on the first page of his account-book; the six persons receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared elected, and the result shall be announced by bulletin.

"We reserve the right of rejecting candidates who are deemed unfitted for a position of trust; in such case the name receiving the next greater number of votes shall be substituted.

"Appointed to act as tellers :—'H.' and 'N.'"

Briefly, this means that the object of the proposed labour committee is to make known the sentiments of the workmen in regard to new factory regulations of every kind. It is to consist of six men, chosen without reference to their special trades. Every workman of one-and-twenty is qualified to vote; every workman of thirty or over, who has been for three years in the employ of the factory is eligible. The choice is at once free and restricted; every workman chosen, whom the management may consider unsuitable, is to be rejected, and his place filled by the candidate receiving the next greater number of votes.

This announcement was read often and carefully on the day of its publication. I took pains to spend as much time as I could, in the neighbourhood of the poster, without attracting notice. I saw that a very large number of men perused it in silence, and returned to their work as they had come, meditatively or with an air of indifference. There were not a few jokes at its expense; some inoffensive enough and some bitter jokes at the new departure. At such times if any harmless fellow, the well-known butt of sarcasm, chanced to be near, he was solemnly assured that he, in any event, was to be elected to this post of honour. A few grumbled; and one young workman of about thirty immediately expressed his frank and decided dislike. In this shape, he declared, the whole thing amounted absolutely to nothing at all; it was like a child still-born. A few who were present ventured upon some timid objections; agreed to the defects of the proposition, but thought it well to wait awhile and try it. When I asked for opinions from one and another of the men on that day and the next, my only reply was a shrug of the shoulders. But at the end of a couple of days there was but one expression of opinion, at least in public; the whole affair was declared false from the start, and probably a sly blow at the working men on the part of the management. The way of voting showed it. An open vote was asked for, in order to get at the real opinion of every individual. If he voted for energetic, clear-headed men who honestly and frankly represented their fellows,

it would be known at once that he, as well as the men of his choice, were social democrats, for they were the only ones who had the courage of independent views. If he voted tamely and ineffectually, then the whole proposition lost its point, for such men would say yes to whatever the bosses proposed, and would never open their lips even against real abuses. And that was the only kind of man the bosses wanted; the fifth paragraph of the poster showed that plainly enough! If the first object were reached, and the honest opinion of every single voter were to be known, they would simply pick out spiritless and easy-going candidates without any regard to the highest votes, and make a labour committee out of them; nuts for the bosses!" Apparently they wanted to get rid of greater obligations by and by, with this formation of a sham representation of labour; for it certainly was only a question of time, with the introduction of the new factory legislation, when a real representation of labour would be legally introduced. They were in hopes of anticipating this compulsory measure, so as to be able to get round it, may be, and at the same time have an air of befriending the workmen. They meant to kill two birds with one stone, and the men, if they agreed to it, would be fooled again!

These ideas carried the day; with the result—if my own observations as well as my information were correct—that on the day set for closing the balloting hardly half the men had written any names whatever in their wage account-book. The rest in our department had abstained from voting. But a very large majority of the men improved a later opportunity to vote, and voted for candidates who received immediate confirmation from the management. Their names were announced, and the new Board of Labour Representation was declared valid. But during the two remaining months of my stay in the factory I never discovered the slightest sign of life in the Board. However often I questioned my mates about it, I could never find one who knew anything whatever on the subject. For social democrats, thoughtful and deeply convinced, here was a fresh proof of the justice of their suspicions.

There is one more story to tell, of a different kind, but pointing the same moral. It concerns one of the men in our factory, an ardent social democrat and a most capable workman, of whose prominent part in the work I have already spoken. At this time he was the only man in charge of his special task, although it had formerly employed two men. But he, on his entrance into the factory had worked with such extraordinary zeal and skill (though not on piece-work wage) that his weaker associate could soon be spared, and was, in fact, removed elsewhere, while the single worker who remained received a rather better rate of pay. This was certainly an advantage to him, and was well deserved, but it was entirely contrary to the social-democratic principle of solidarity, which, as I understand it, means nothing more nor less than the old proverb of the mediæval guilds: "What supports two, one shall not do." Yet in this case as in the other, and in many others, it is proved that momentary self-interest is stronger than any social-democratic hobby, however much it promises, or even than genuine and well-defined social-democratic conviction.

From all that I have said it appears most distinctly that on account of the vagueness and obscurity of social-democratic teachings as well as the conservative and practical nature which underlies all the wild and visionary enthusiasm of the German workman, the purely political and social agitation of social democracy has not yet met with a success proportionate to the amount of time and strength spent upon it for years in Chemnitz, and that it has by no means succeeded in infusing precisely identical political sentiments and ideals among the mass of the labouring population. I believe it never can do this; at all events it is my firm conviction that this is not the field where the social-democratic propaganda is most effective and far-reaching. That field is elsewhere, as the following chapter will go to show. But one great thing has been accomplished in social politics; the working men have been taught, in spite of all distinctions, inconsistencies, and differences of opinion, to look upon themselves as a great political and social class, for ever bound together by common interests, and represented, as a whole, by social democracy, no

matter how, as individuals, they stand towards it. However much they were in the right who bitterly complained to me that the working men only showed a solid front in their own meetings and not elsewhere, it is none the less true that whenever feeling ran high, as at election times and in their own meetings, they naturally and involuntarily ranged themselves as one great whole, in opposition to every other political and social class.

The wage-earners among whom I lived are not, therefore, to be imagined, in regard to their political and social ideals, as a uniform, symmetrical and homogeneous body, but rather—to use a metaphor—as a mighty pyramid, consolidated by the strong cement of social-democratic agitation. Its apes are the "élite" social democrats I have described; from these, the leaders, and the small band of their most trusty followers, the vast structure gradually descends in ever-widening strata, to the chaotic multitude of all those who are social democrats only—nor can they be blamed for this to-day—because they give their votes to "one of their own sort," a labour candidate and a social democrat.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION AND RELIGION

THE personnel of our factory was obviously made up from three classes of the population. There were, first, the former peasant class, farm hands and day labourers, some of whom had left their native villages far behind, some of whom still came daily to the works from country homes; next, the city wage-earning class, brought up from childhood, as a matter of course, to the factory, where their fathers and grandfathers before them had found livelihood and occupation; finally, the class of small mechanics and petty employés of the Government, drifted hither from little provincial towns, rarely from cities. Of these the second was naturally the largest group, although the mass of farm labourers approached it nearly in number, while those who came from small towns were fewest of all. These latter were almost without exception skilled workmen, and were young men from eighteen to twenty-three years old; the country people, on the other hand, did manual labour, and were employed on the drill-press and planing machines, while the regular, so to say, professional factory workmen, if I may call them so, were to be found in all three divisions of labour, *viz.* the hand-work, the machine-work, and also—but the percentage was very small—in the ranks of skilled workers, vice-hands, blacksmiths, carpenters, etc.

It is needless to say that the individuals of these three groups brought with them into the factory and the common life of our wage-earning community the spirit, the ideas, the social characteristics, the philosophy and the habits of life which exist in these three distinct classes of the population. Of course they did not remain sharply separated from each other, or permanently definite

in character. On the contrary, they rubbed against each other a great deal, and, by mutual contact and by the pressure of social-democratic agitation and the new life peculiar to the factory, they came more or less to the same level. This took place the more rapidly and thoroughly in proportion as the individual had been more or less accustomed to factory life, and as he had broken more or less absolutely with his past. But the same three-fold stream of mental and moral characteristics, of political and social proclivities, continued to flow through the factory with continually renewed distinctness, as even fresh recruits from the country districts and small towns came in. Some of these, above all the country people, came to remain permanently; others to stay for a longer or shorter time, learning what they could, and then returning to the parental work-shop or small handicraft, or passing on to municipal or State establishments for the construction of railway or fire-engines, or to gas and water works as subaltern officials, or, in case they remained with us, becoming master-workmen, and so being lifted out of the labouring class proper.

Corresponding to this three-fold social stratification, clearly distinguishable and greatly affecting every relation and condition, there was also a three-fold form of mental development to be seen among the operatives. This is not wholly due either to the influence of class distinctions or that other equally important factor, the different kind of school in which the workman had received his instruction, *viz.* the village school of the peasant, the grammar schools of the smaller cities designed the more prosperous circles, and the common public or ward school of the larger cities which was frequented by those whom I have called the professional workmen. Differences in pursuits, incomes and habits on the one hand, and in teachers and teaching on the other, are equally insufficient alone to account for it, but it is due, as I think, to the combined working of both these factors. For since each one of these three classes of the population bears clearly the imprint of one of these three methods of instruction, and since thus the mental characteristics of the school coincide with the entire social characteristics of the class whose children attend

it and unconsciously embody it in their own little personalities, the result, in each case, is a certain quality of thought, of acquirement, of the whole mental plane, perfectly distinct from the other two, so that they may be properly set down as different classes of development, each of which finds its more or less visible exponent in the persons of numerous working men.

To begin with the description of village education as it appeared in my fellow-workmen who had come from the rural districts. Its chief characteristic is a thoroughly religious and sectarian instruction in which the Bible played a chief rôle. And this is quite natural, as in the village school religious instruction is acknowledged to occupy the most prominent position in the curriculum, and this holds true both with respect to quantity and quality. But this is not all; the spirit and method of the religious instruction are transferred to the other studies, so that, in the eyes of the children, one branch of study is very like another. In the singing lessons, besides the national and patriotic songs which are often exceedingly devout, chorals and hymns are constantly practised; the reading books are made up of moral or religious selections; the history lessons are largely based on Jewish and Bible history; and in writing and arithmetic, in geography and science, the ultimate point of view is, quite unconsciously, the religious one. Add to this that the family life in the home, the whole sentiment of the village community, all the habits which prevail in it, are influenced or controlled by religion and the Church, so that away from school the growing boy finds everywhere the same thoughts, ideas, phraseology, modes of action and customs, conditioned by the same mental influences which animate and govern all his school teaching. Nor do these conditions change if he leaves school and finds occupation in his native place as farm hand, day-labourer, or small proprietor. Should he feel the need, after his school days, as not often happens, of further mental culture, the parish priest is the only educated man whom he meets, and with whom he can converse. But the priest, as often as he meets him, has spiritual duties to fulfil in his behalf, and his new thoughts are once more clad in a

religious form and guise, so that, finally, the pulpit is the only place, the Bible and hymnal, with perhaps an old prayer-book handed down from his ancestors, the only books from which he can draw mental sustenance and stimulus.

So it is almost inevitable that the whole range of ideas which the homely, hard-working peasant acquires should be wholly bounded by religion, that his little store of knowledge should be limited by the worldly wisdom of the Scriptures, and wholly dependent upon their stage of intellectual advancement, and that the thoughts which he gradually learns to think for himself should be the same in conception, in kind, in form, and in reach, as those of the men of Holy Writ. His ideas of history are hopelessly bound up with his belief in miracles, without which the centuries of antiquity, or the Middle Ages, or the period from the Reformation to the enlightened present, can neither be restored as the past, nor be rendered intelligible to his mind. Nature is to him a riddle unsolved and unsolvable, a Sphinx, about whom an impenetrable veil of silence is drawn, he knows nothing of the laws of evolution which modern science teaches, nothing of protoplasm, or the conservation of energy; the biblical story of creation remains the real source of his conceptions of nature, the only authoritative premiss of his reasoning about the world. Finally, the social life of mankind, if he thinks about it at all, appears to him determined, as it was in the days of Israel, by religious and moral considerations, hardened into customs, and regulated by the Church as the vital principle of the community.

This biblical way of looking at everything seemed to me all the more deeply impressed upon the minds and hearts of the people since it was in their eyes plainly upheld, supported and sealed by the infallible authority of the Scriptures from which it was derived. This authority is binding to them, not merely in the old idea of inspiration wherever the Scriptures "declare Christ Jesus," but equally binding and equally infallible in its secular teachings, down to the very last iota. I saw that they looked to the Bible, not merely for an answer to the question "How shall a man find peace of heart?" but to every imaginable perplexity, in-

tellectual or scientific. Indeed I might almost say it was for this latter purpose that they chiefly used the Scriptures, whose value in answering the other question was almost unknown to them.

There was, moreover, a third feature in the case, equally important and long since recognised by all earnestly thinking men, confirmed also every day in my own intercourse with the people, the fact, that is, that the gospel truths of salvation are taught to-day in the schools not as plain personal living truths, but as something to be learned and memorised as they are formulated in the catechism; addressed not to the hearts, but to the heads of the children. Thus religious instruction becomes an exercise for developing the mind, not the character, and the Christian truth of salvation a cold lesson to be recited instead of a warm all-penetrating stream of life; Jesus Christ, as He is revealed by dogma, is a metaphysical riddle and not a divine historic person. If I may carry my observation further, it seems to me that the customary preparation for confirmation fails to fill this gap in the school teaching. Judging, at least, from its effects on the people, it does not, to-day, fulfil its chief task, which is to lay a sure foundation whereon the eternal truths of the religion may be applied to the manifold facts of life. Rather is it my universal experience that the impression, however solemn, of confirmation, vanishes shortly, during youth itself, and leaves no trace behind.

These three features, *viz.* the dependency of the intellectual development upon the Scriptural range of thought and form of culture, the false idea of the authority of the Bible, and the constant reference of the truths of Christianity to the mental faculties, gave a distinct characteristic to the education which each successive country-bred workman brought with him into the city and into our factory, and which unfailingly became the source of a severe intellectual and religious crisis, in which the old order of things was almost always swept away to be replaced by a new one.

The training of the young men who came to us from the better class of mechanics and small Government officials had been of a different sort. The schools which they had attended provided

longer hours of instruction, a wider range of study, fuller and better teaching than the village schools. They afforded not merely the rudiments of an education as the latter did, but a rounded, completed, and systematised course, not professing, indeed, to open the whole domain of knowledge to the pupil, but rapidly surveying its various fields, as for example geography, natural history, and the rest, and giving him, at any rate, the chief facts and the whole outline of the subject. Furthermore,—quite otherwise than in the village schools—the instruction in each particular branch is its own end. It is not carried on in an ethico-religious atmosphere; the teaching is based upon the results of modern science, and is far more independent than the other of Scriptural doctrine and the world of traditional dogma. It is at once more modern and more secular, and not every school-hour has a marked religious tendency.

Religious instruction is still, to be sure, a very important part of the teaching, but it is only a part of it. Just as in the village schools, it is largely a question of reciting the catechism. Its subject-matter is the structure of Church dogma logically built upon the foundation of scientific theories long obsolete; its method is the mental grasping and memorising of creeds, hymns, and Bible passages, without any real inward appropriation of their religious and ethical vitality as it is shown to us in the person of Jesus Christ, and always, needless to say, accepting the doctrine of the literal inspiration of the Scriptures and not questioning the accuracy of its secular teaching. Yet, practically, the schools apply a strong, if silent, corrective to this teaching by setting aside, in the other lessons, that authority which should be logically binding in them, and by recognising and applying the authority of modern science, without attempting an explanation of the inconsistency of so doing. So religious instruction becomes, like any other, a purely intellectual process, but, unlike any other, it is kept painfully isolated as if it were a subject to be very cautiously handled.

At first, to be sure, the naïve young mind hardly has a consciousness of this, especially when on his parents' part there is a

conservative attitude of reverence for the Church, which, together with the rationalistic ethical sentiment, affords a certain support so long as the growing youth, fairly protected by society, remains in his own rank and station. But when he quits it, and, entering a great factory like ours, steps at once into a different social group —composed in this case of the social-democratic wage-earners of a large city—the inner contradiction, the great wrong which has been done to both his mental and his religious training, becomes apparent, and he, too, like his country brother, has to undergo a struggle which may not be so radical in its effect, perhaps, or result in such absolute and helpless overturning of even his secular conceptions, but out of which he almost always comes an altered man, and whose price is usually the surrender of all that Christianity has meant to him, unquestioned heretofore.

Finally there is the training of the large city public school, the ordinary education of the last and largest group of our working classes. It was my impression that in many respects it was like that given in the grammar schools of the smaller cities; but in the scope and character of its teaching, it stands more nearly on the level of a large, fully systematised village school of eight grades. Here, too, we meet an exaggerated subordination of secular branches of study to that of the Bible, with the same false notion of the latter's authority, and the same intellectual presentation and acceptance of Christian truths as of any other subject.

But the evil results of this method come to light much more rapidly and directly. For among the pupils of this class of schools, the restraining and wholesome influence of home habits, powerful still with both the other groups, is usually lacking. Beneath the pressure of the new form of capitalistic production which has revolutionised everything, this latest generation of skilled factory-hands in our large cities is freed from the traditional and established ways of living, out of which our earlier class distinctions have grown, and which are not yet replaced, or at least only tentatively, and with no certainty of permanence, by a new order. The direct opposite of permanence, an ever-restless ebb and flow, is the law which governs the lives of these

men and prevents them from taking any steady course; the old force of habit has given way to the impulse of the moment.

This unrest of the new social order exerts a profound influence on the mental and religious development of most of its members. It does not allow the rudimentary education, received at school, to remain as a solid foundation for later knowledge, but rids men rapidly of much of it, throws suspicion on much more, and produces at once a need and a longing for a better and broader teaching, which shall be free from inconsistencies, and in harmony with the most recent criticism, which shall command their respect and at the same time shall off-set and make amends for the partial or utter emptiness and dulness of monotonous and uninteresting occupations, and for which they are ready to sacrifice the whole of their formal, youthful education, never valued because never fruitful of results. So it was that to most of the third group, and above all to the talented, ambitious and thoughtful members of it, the inner conflict of which I have spoken came in a more sudden, violent and subversive form than to either of the other two groups, differently also, because, for the most part, it came to these men from no pressure or influence from without, but from the force of the circumstances into which they were born, from their own perceptions of inconsistency and incompleteness and their own reflections upon men and things.

This impulse towards education lies, like an elemental force, deep in the hearts and heads of many in this third group of our factory workmen. It confronted the observer every day and at every turn, and found utterance in a hundred ways, in words and wishes, sighs and questions; sometimes explicitly, sometimes vaguely, sometimes earnestly and bitterly, sometimes gaily and with a jest. In strong natures it showed itself as a sort of hunger for education, ready to devour everything it could lay hands on, without judgment or discrimination; but it is in the international eight-hour movement that it finds its most direct and imposing expression. That movement is not a mere evidence of a disposition to shirk, or of greed of pleasure, of arrogance or quarrelsomeness, nor is it a mere manifestation of social-democratic

tendencies and economic demands, but to the best of my knowledge and conviction, it is a proof of the yearning of our factory population for more light, more truth, more knowledge. What they would have is time to provide for those wants of the inner man, to which even the humblest factory-hand may lay just claim. But this to-day, as I have proved to my satisfaction in my own person, is absolutely impossible for the majority of men, who are bound to a work-bench in a noisy and reeking factory from six o'clock in the morning until six at night, or even longer; who have, moreover, a walk, sometimes of three miles, to and from their work, and who reach home in the evening tired, hungry and dirty. Looking at the question from this point of view, and taking the eight-hour movement as seriously as it is in fact taken by a part of our population, namely, as the only practicable means by which they can really hope to satisfy their craving for education, I do not hesitate, not only to cordially recognise and endorse it, but also to work for its gradual slow accomplishment, undisturbed by the fact that it is used by the rougher element of our people as a pretext for demonstrations as silly and useless as they are unseemly.

But great as is this desire for education on the part of the masses, the obstacles in the way of its fulfilment are equally great. I have already mentioned the chief one, the excessive length of the working-day, together with the long walks to and from the factory ; others are the small and crowded dwellings with their many occupants to every room, and the absorbing anxieties on one hand and the opportunities for excitement and pleasure on the other. The result is that, in all natures but those of strong will and ardent aspiration, this impulse toward education remains only a desire, and seldom goes beyond good intentions and vague inclination ; it follows, above all, that a large proportion of the very young is entirely without any interest in education whatsoever. We have seen that the men from the rural districts seldom felt any direct mental stimulus, while in those from the better classes it was observable rather in the impulse towards technical training. The men who were ambitious, eager for knowledge and

bound to get on, were usually from twenty to thirty years old, and belonged to the third social group.

These three forms of development go through a complete metamorphosis in the factory. They are continually undermined by the influence of social democracy, and the shape in which they emerge again is a new one—the social-democratic.

For social democracy has mastered this question of popular education. It has given ear, as no other party has done, to this urgent appeal for instruction from the lower classes, and in twenty years of systematic work it has sought to satisfy its main requirements. Thus it has gradually created a popular literature to whose dimensions the catalogues of social-democratic booksellers testify, and whose range of subjects is such as popular literature has never before dared to present; treated more superficially and slightly than the old religion and patriotic books, but no less popular in tone, and quite in accordance with the modern spirit. It has undertaken in these writings to do what the old books left undone; with a bold hand it has popularised modern science. It has not been afraid to give the people dry formulas, tedious, unembellished demonstrations; hard, heavy fare which it takes long to assimilate. But it is exactly what the people want to-day; they long to grapple with the arduous mental problems which lie close before them, inflaming heart and brain; they insist upon having a share in the new thought as well as the cultured classes whom they have hitherto looked upon as beings of another order, but with whom they now propose to be equal sovereigns in the realm of mind.

But social democracy has not dealt fairly and honestly in creating this new popular literature. It has abused the people's confidence. It has given them not modern science as it really is, but an abstract of it which is an evidence of the plan of agitation. It has distorted or suppressed the new truths at its own pleasure, it has given everything a party colour, and has placed the result so obtained solely at the service of its own interests. If it is clearly its first and highest aim to release the working man in feeling, thought and action, from the relation in which he has

hitherto naturally stood to the rest of society, to set him in irrepressible opposition to "the whole reactionary body," and not only to imbue him with the new political and social views of the party, but to fuse these views into one special and peculiar feeling and philosophy, then there is, in fact, no better way to accomplish these ends than a new popular literature skilfully adapted and applied. Such a literature can at once quench the thirst of the people for the new education, and quickly, effectually and permanently efface the remnants of the old from heart and brain. And since the old education is, as we know, steeped in the spirit of Christianity, rooted in the Bible and permeated with those views of life and the world which the Bible breathes, since these things are its very core and kernel, its cohesive and sustaining force, since, in a word, the Christian ideal is essentially the cornerstone of the traditional education, and since it seemed evident that if this could be removed the battle would be won, the whole new popular literature which sprang up was directed to combatting the Christian ideal, and to this end those results of modern science were selected which were opposed or could readily be brought into opposition to that ideal. Over against the doctrine and belief of a Divine order of the universe which had hitherto been the distinctive mark of popular education, was arrayed the doctrine of a purely natural order, presented in the new literature in a hundred treatises, large and small, good and bad, on religion and science, history and philosophy, art and letters. The writings of Darwin, of Häckel, of Büchner were manipulated, Spinoza and Feuerbach, Schopenhauer and Hartmann were garbled, the newest researches in astronomy and geology were turned to account—these more objectively than the rest—Strauss and Renan, Bruno Bauer and the French neo-Catholic encyclopædists were brought into requisition, and finally—in the very prime of the critical method—all history was misrepresented and taught to the poor people solely from the standpoint of materialistic philosophy and economic evolution. Such is the origin of the latest popular literature, an unparalleled attempt, not without a certain bold grandeur, to scatter with one hand the new radical teachings,

economic and political, of the party, and with the other to sweep away all the old training and education of Christianity and the Bible from the heads and hearts of the masses, nay, from the world itself. It has no place for faith in a living, personal God, who is Father of all, nor for the life immortal. It has nothing to say of guilt or sin, of grace, redemption or salvation ; instead of ethical law sacred and eternal, it offers natural laws, cold and unyielding ; instead of love, solidarity ; instead of the moral ideal, the force of mere custom, changing with every change in the economic conditions of the nation.

And greedily, indeed, did the crowd of those hungering for education fall upon the new fare thus offered them. Here, they thought, was what they had so long craved and sought for ; here was that whose possession they had envied so long and so bitterly in the great ones of the earth ; here were truth, knowledge, culture. These at least they would have, who as yet could have neither wealth nor comfort nor possessions like those fortunate ones ; intellectually, at least, they would be their equals, nay, their superiors ! And had they not also the promise of the social-democratic leaders that under the star of this new truth and science, whose beams were to herald in the new splendid socialistic state of the future, the world should be quite other than the earth they knew, and that the standard-bearers of the new truth should also be the lords of the new day ? Thus for the straining, struggling workmen's souls the present and the future alike hung on this new treasure. They could be restrained no longer ; to enjoy the one and attain to the other, they wilfully flung away not alone what was outgrown and obsolete of the old teaching, its actual drags and hindrances, but what was precious and vital in it as well ; all, all, as the new books and the new teaching took care to bid them, and they seized on the new ideas which were presented to them with no less claim to authority and infallibility than the old biblical teaching had had, and thus there began in the people the new social-democratic development ; a development more one-sided than any the world has ever known.

It ran like wildfire among the hundreds of thousands of German

working men. Its earliest converts, according to the law which governs all spiritual life, became its new prophets, its inspired preachers. They were chiefly men of parts and intellect, the ablest among them, noble in nature as well. From inner conviction they gave their whole strength, their utmost capacity to the cause. Not merely in party meetings, but during work and during recess in the factory, at dinner and at supper at home, on their walks, and wherever else two or three were together, men set forth and discussed the thoughts they had imbibed from one book or half a dozen books of the new literature; sometimes fairly grasped, sometimes only half comprehended and more than half forgotten, but always brought afresh to their minds by the articles in their social-democratic paper. I need not describe it further; it is the same spontaneous, unorganised agitation of the new social-democratic ideas of which I spoke at the end of the fourth chapter; the most powerful, trenchant, irresistible weapon of the party, which no manufacturer and no police regulation can proscribe, and which is wielded by the mighty arm of personal conviction.

The effect of this agitation was the one desired. Under its pressure all the old youthful training of the working man gave way, and is still giving way in every individual who brings such a training with him to a factory where the spirit of social democracy prevails. The three great mistakes of our whole system of popular education find their punishment; the mistake of making the various branches of secular instruction depend on the range of thought and stage of culture of the Bible, the false conception of its authority, and the merely intellectual acceptation of Christian truth. Before the modern principles of education the ancient scriptural ones cannot endure; before the authority of exact science which underlies those principles, the authority of the Bible, on which they formerly rested, and which erroneously declared them as irrefragable and binding as its religious truths, must give way; before the critical method of the modern scholar, the metaphysical speculations of traditional dogma, wherein the truth of Christianity was once supposed to be found, fall head-

long. There are, indeed, some honest hearts who instinctively feel that all that glitters in the new culture is not gold, that it may leave one quite as joyless, doubtful, and discontented as the old teaching; that, in spite of everything, there may yet be somewhere in the old a kernel of truth, final, eternal, unchangeable, but they cannot find the determinate point where it lies. The men are wanting who shall help them to this, and show them how to distinguish what is useless, transitory, the work or the error of human minds, from the eternal and essential truth; no man concerns himself about them in the swarming communities where they chiefly live, no man gives them modern weapons, forges them modern armour, or imparts to them those actual, genuine, incontestable and unfalsified results of the latest scientific research which alone would enable them to encounter the furious onset of social-democratic half-culture, and furnish them with proof and strength to lay bare its folly. All of them, moreover, without exception, share the deep longing for better economic conditions which social democracy has undertaken to bring about, and whose glorious fulfilment is promised to them when the new theory shall be at last victorious. In this way those who hesitate are forced to their knees before this "science." And so, whether he will or no, man after man falls hopelessly into the bondage of the new ideas, the modern social-democratic philosophy; flings away his old faith with his old learning, without finding in the new the reward he has been promised and which his enthusiastic prophets declare they themselves have found; he goes continually seeking, groping, looking longingly back to see if the old teaching may not, after all, be renewed and proven true, and then again despairing before the fatal arguments of his "cultured" companions which he cannot refute. And so the vast majority live through their poor vacant lives, joyless, hopeless, helpless. "If it were only six o'clock!—if it were only Sunday!" This was the perpetual cry to be heard many a time daily, often followed by comments such as, "strange how working men are always wishing time away—with old age just ahead of them! It's all nonsense. One day will always be just like another. The same old

round begins again to-morrow morning, and we must be thankful if we can earn anything." This is the language of utter hopelessness, the despair of finding any worth or meaning or purpose in life. One step further, and it can change into a cry of rage and revolt which would destroy everything because it finds nothing worthy of living, which despairs of everything because it can find no hope for itself. Then follows the unchaining of every passion and the revolution of a people is here. There is no doubt that this last step has not as yet been taken; the people, as yet, do not dream of rising or outbreak. But there is also no doubt that the danger of these things is nearer than the people themselves imagine. And it will be upon us the moment when, to the disregard of religion among the labouring masses, which is to-day complete, the disregard of ethics shall be added; when the absence of the religious motive shall produce its ultimate effect upon the conduct of life. Here, then, and not in the political and industrial organisation of the masses, is the most fatal influence of social-democratic agitation; and here, in the overthrow of the Christian traditions, has it met with its greatest success. This is not its own merit, or guilt, indeed; it is only the hand that has swiftly and triumphantly reaped the harvest which other hands have sown. But this fact does not change the distress that prevails, nor the magnitude of the danger that threatens.

I have now to establish the truth of my conclusions by my own experiences in the factory. I will roughly set down conversations, illustrations, incidents, without any connection and with very little comment; they shall speak for themselves.

One day, two men from our squad were told off to carry some large iron driving-wheels, fifteen to twenty centimetres in diameter, for running belts of single machines from the ground floor to the second gallery. We each took a pair on our shoulders and climbed up with them. In the place where they were to be put, a workman, in the prime of life, was sitting alone by the window. His unvarying task was to bore little holes in myriads of steel pens. Near him, half hidden by his revolving table, lay the last

number of the *Presse.* From his high window he overlooked the whole city with its hundred smoking chimney-stacks.

My mate, who was a snuff-taker, went up to him and offered him a pinch. From the respectful manner in which this was done, I saw that the new acquaintance must be one of the strong minds of the factory and an outspoken social democrat. I took a pinch also, and we were soon in full talk.

He asked me why I had come to the factory, and, with a heavy heart, I repeated my fiction of being a copying-clerk out of work.

"What sort of a theological paper was it that your pastor edited?" he asked. "Something like our Sunday paper, *Der Nachbar?*"

"No," I said. "The paper is for educated people and students, particularly for such as are not divinity students. Its object is to prove that there is no gulf at all between Christianity and culture, religion and science."

"That's not so; such a proof can't be found; your pastor may try as long as he likes."

"I don't agree with you," I answered.

"Modern science . . . ."

"Modern science, which is based on investigation of nature, dealt only with the visible world about us, the world that is known to our senses; that is the only world that science studies, and science can only judge of what we hear and see and feel and taste and smell."

"Yes, very good, that's quite right. What are your conclusions?"

"Well, let us draw the conclusions."

And I tried an experiment which I had tried many times before. We say continually that God is capable of scientific and intellectual demonstration. Here was evidently a man who, intellectually, denied Him. If our proposition is true, it might be that I could convince my opponent with the customary proofs. I attempted to present the argument as follows, in as popular a manner as I could. My man knew Darwin, so it was best to begin there.

"Darwin teaches, doesn't he, that the whole world is developed from lower to higher?"

"Yes."

"He says that protoplasm is the first thing there was?"

"Yes."

"But every effect must have a cause. Protoplasm too, then?"

"Yes."

"Then there must have been some force to create the protoplasm out of which the whole universe has evolved itself? Suppose we call this force, God. We see that in the process of evolution and in the world evolved there are certain definite laws. They must originate in this force. But wherever there is law and system, there must be reasoning power and mind. In this world not only minerals and vegetables, but also animals and human beings, have been evolved—of course, under the influence of this force. Men are personalities endowed with reasoning power and mind. The reasoning force which evolved them must be master of its acts even more than they are; it must, therefore, also be a Personality endowed with reasoning power and mind. Again, the highest that man knows, the perfection after which he is striving, lies in love. But the creative, reasoning, conscious, personal force must have and be that for which those it has itself created strive. It follows, then, that there is a personal God, and that He is Love, and the Father of His children."

But my opponent only shook his head and said:

"My belief is that Nature is God; He is no rational being, but pure force."

It was the logical reply that I had expected; for proofs like those I had given have no value save for him who is already a Christian.

"So, at least, you have a belief?" I went on, as he was silent.

"Yes; but Christianity is a superstition. It came to light first in the fourth century, when it was established by vote of the majority. The Bible is a book like any other. It was compiled five hundred years after Christ. It's a book in the interests of the great. Everything is in the Bible—you can read anything

you please out of it. And the separate books of the Bible are spurious."

That was going too fast, I said. So far as I knew from the pastor with whom I had been, the university professors had looked into the matter thoroughly, and decided what books were certainly genuine. "I think it is positively known that the Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians and the Galatians, were written by the Apostle Paul."

But he went on, "There isn't a single legal proof of Christ, as there is of Socrates and such people. How does it happen that from the twelfth to the thirtieth year of Christ's life nothing is known about Him? It proves that all the rest about Him is pure fable."

It would have been easy for me to meet this charge, and he shifted his ground.

"What is true about Christ is, that He was a man like me. He wanted to help His fellow-men, and He gave His teaching the shape the times called for; He made them religious. Religion to-day is only good for cowing and keeping down the people—great blockheads! Why don't the upper classes follow the teachings of Christ then? Why don't they bear one another's burdens? Why don't they right wrongs? Why don't they do a little self-sacrifice? If they have religion, and religion is truth, they ought to show it in their actions; let them live out a little practical Christianity, and we might believe in it."

He was asking for the evidence of an active, living Christian personality; the only really convincing evidence of the truth of the faith that is in us.

"There's certainly truth in a great deal that you say," I answered, "if not in all of it. I hate, too, the hypocritical brood that use the holiest things for their own profit, and drag them through the mud. But why do you think that the truth of the Christian faith must stand or fall with a parcel of scoundrels? Has a highly-developed trade got to go because there are some bunglers at it? I have lived, in my time, with good honest Christians, who took care to honour their faith by their lives. And they are a proof of Christianity to me."

"You were hypnotised by them. When two men live together for a long time one hypnotises the other."

"Then you have been hypnotised by the other sort of men. Then there's no such thing as a real, manly, independent opinion. Then everything is a lie and a cheat. Then everything comes back just to believing, at last!"

He made no reply to this, and I went on.

"And it *is* just that; everything *does* come back to believing at last. Look at that tree. How do you know it is a tree? You've been taught it is from your childhood up, and you've believed it, and now you think you know it."

"That may be!" he said, but went on, evading the question. "I can convince myself of the tree's existence, but not of God's existence."

"Certainly you can. Only not in the same way, not through your reason. That the tree is a real tree I see and feel; when the wind blows, I can hear it too. But there's another plane which can't be perceived by the senses nor comprehended by the mere intellect. That is the plane of moral and ethical life, where the intellect can't meet the demand, where faith and conscience have to settle the question of necessity and truth. Science and intellect can neither prove that there is a God, nor that there isn't. But the proof that can't be set aside comes through the historical, human person, Jesus Christ. By His teachings, His life and death, we know that there is a God. For there was a power in Him, such as no man ever had, and He has told us He had this power from God. We know from it, too, what God is, and that is Love. And that it is true that there is this living God, proclaimed by Jesus Christ, everyone may find out for himself who has the desire and the courage to model his life on Christ's, who is ready to trust in God with his whole heart; in other words—who believes."

But he shook his head once more.

"It's natural that anybody under a delusion should twist and turn everything so as to make a plausible case. But he hasn't got the facts with him."

He meant those hard facts, visible and tangible, which materialism requires and has. But of facts historical, moral, spiritual, he had no comprehension, and he felt no longing for peace. Yet without these Christianity is impossible.

So I said no more, and we began to talk of other matters, but not for long, for a foreman, who had been watching us for some time, came up and separated us rather roughly.

One day, about a fortnight later, it happened that work was slack, and I was standing idle beside one of the mechanics at his bench, a quiet fellow, very sympathetic to me. Half-an-hour before, one of my intimates, of whom I have already had much to say, had been taken home, his foot crushed by the fall of a heavy iron rail. The mechanic and I were talking over the accident, and I was saying that the injured man had gleefully told me that very morning of a piece of good luck that had befallen him the day before. A large iron disc weighing hundreds of pounds, which had already cost one of our porters a toe, had slipped while it was being lifted about, and had just missed coming down on both his legs.

"He has caught it to-day, though not so badly," said I. "Now, is that chance or Providence?"

"Those are things we can't see into," the man said.

"But Christians say there's no such thing as chance."

"What is Christianity? Nothing! What is 'der liebe Gott?' Nobody has ever seen Him. And the son of God? We're all God's children."

"Certainly we are," I retorted, "if we imitate Jesus, do the will of God, believe in Him with all our heart, and pray for strength daily. A great deal depends on prayer."

He smiled and said:

"There's the Bible. Of course there's a great deal that's true in it, but there's a great deal that isn't. And it isn't made for us, but for the upper classes."

Again that terrible accusation! Then we began to talk about the clergy.

"Oh, yes!" he said; "there are some fine men among them;

but, after all, they get their living by Christianity, and a pretty comfortable one too. Show me one of them that lived as Christ did, and had so many hardships and persecutions!"

"And if a minister who was really like Christ should come among us workmen to-day, wouldn't he set things right?" I asked.

"Not much; it's too late. If Christ Himself couldn't get rid of poverty in the world, no more can Christianity nowadays."

"Christianity doesn't want to get rid of poverty any more than Christ Himself did; it wants to give men inward peace and strength from above to bear outside hardships, and rise above them."

"Peace? Strength? Other things would give us much more of those!"

"No, if Christianity can't give us those, it can't give us anything."

Then he was silent, and our conversation was over.

Towards the end of my stay in the factory, I once asked a man directly how he felt about religion and Christianity. I knew he was an ardent social democrat, but he was good-nature and politeness itself, a genuine Saxon. He had once been in the household of an attorney-at-law for whom he had done many little extra services, in return for which, besides his pay, the attorney had lent him all kinds of books on geography, science, and history, whose exact titles he could not give me. He answered my frank question with equal frankness, honestly, and to the point. "I don't talk much about those things, and I never argue about them. I let everybody think as he likes, but I have my own opinion, and it is—Where you can't find out anything, there's nothing to find out. That's the end of it!"

He was more amiable than another man of the same stamp, a weaver of our suburb, and, to judge by appearances, on very small pay. I met him one evening in the Turnhalle I have mentioned. The man was what is usually called an all-round athlete; a fine powerful fellow with a splendid figure evenly developed. At the end of the exercise hour I went with him to a quiet saloon near by, a favourite resort with all of us, to get a glass of beer. He was a clever fellow, fanatically devoted to the cold water cure,

and to social democracy, and one of the leaders in the large class of Chemnitz weavers who were suffering real distress without apparently getting much consideration from their employers. He talked to me a great deal about the wage struggle as it had gone on, and in which he had taken a prominent part, earnestly, impersonally, and with the calmness peculiar to so many among the people. I gradually led the talk to religious topics, and asked for his opinion. It was brief, concise, and consistently social-democratic. The Church, he said, was merely a State institution very well devised for stultifying the people; but it ought not to be abolished, only thoroughly reconstructed. It ought to be so managed as to teach and preach natural science.

All whom I have hitherto described belonged to that group of my social-democratic fellow-workmen who were real enthusiasts and truth-seekers, men of noble natures and strong minds. With all their rejection of religion, with all their contempt for the Church, they were yet moderate in their criticism, decent in their expressions and at more or less pains to understand and be just to the standpoint of those who believed. But there existed a much larger class of equally sincere social democrats, rougher men, who had only scorn and laughter and blasphemy for the sacred things of our faith. They, too, used the catch-word, "Nature is God, God is Nature." But they liked to vary it, and often in the most indecent manner. Such a company was gathered once in a drinking hall, when the conversation fell for a moment on religious subjects, bluntly designated at once as idiotic nonsense, one man exclaiming, "O what are you giving us? our God is a strict old woman!" A burst of laughter followed this witticism and closed the discussion. I need not set down all the wretched stuff of the kind that I overheard.

It was especially among the young people that one met with this way of thinking. With them, less than anywhere, was there any attempt to look at the matter seriously, or even impersonally. They had generally long since outgrown such things! One lad, a Thuringian, confounded Christianity with Anti-Semiticism, which he hated as ignoble and unjust, and which he declared, not with-

out truth, to be the very opposite of real Christianity. People went to church and pulled long faces, but their lives weren't a whit better than other men's who didn't pretend anything, and who were a good deal more above-board. I could only answer him as I had answered the first. He, too, was silenced; but he could not be induced to give up his equation, Christianity = Anti-Semiticism. It was, besides, no easy matter to keep the talk longer on such subjects. He frankly thought them not worth talking about, like many others who said so to my face. "Religion—there's no more of that among working men," said another young fellow, a Berliner by birth. He had been particularly overbearing in his manner to me in the beginning, when I gave him to understand what was my own attitude towards Christianity. Later on, however, I was a good deal with him, and found him, in spite of his Berlin airs, a quick-witted, strenuous little fellow, who really knew no better, and who gradually—the only one of them all—came to better and more earnest feelings for religion, through intercourse with me, without any attempt at conversion on my part; although I am bound to say he could hardly be called devout! I met him one Sunday afternoon and we went for a walk together, in the course of which he asked me casually what I had done in the morning. I had gone to church, I told him. "You idiot!" he said. I asked him why he thought so, and talked to him a little about the reasonableness of my religious convictions. To make a long story short, before I finally left Chemnitz he told me of his own notion one Saturday, that he should like to go to church with me on the following day. We accordingly went to church together, and he was quite well pleased. At last he made me a sort of confession of love: he wished he could always be in company like mine—it would make another man of him!

He was already in the best society. He shared a good room with a young fellow from Pomerania of about his own age, namely, twenty years, whom he had met in Berlin, and in whose company he had come to Chemnitz. The Pomeranian was a quiet, inoffensive fellow, from a very poor artisan's family, but one of the few whose Christianity is an integral part of itself not

to be sloughed off, from whom all counter influences seem to slide off harmlessly. He had a silent but strong ascendency over his room-mate.

This same young man, a vice-hand, worked in the factory between two others of the same age. Of the religious views of one of these latter I know but little. He came from the neighbourhood of Wurzen, near Leipzig, where his father had a large well-established smithy in a little country place, to which the son was to return when he had seen the world and the factory and sown his wild oats. He showed me once a flask of fresh water, and said with a laugh, "Here's the pure Word of God!" The last of the three was a type of the ordinary young factory hand, and lived a wild life. I met him every Sunday in the dance-halls with a girl; he knew that his parents were fairly prosperous. The scepticism of the social-democratic agitation had produced its normal effect in his case. He was, to give an example, godfather to the child of a young married friend. One day his god-child died; the funeral was held three days later in the middle of the afternoon. The next day he was completely worn out; and in response to my questions he told me in one breath that the pastor had spoken beautifully at the grave, and that they had kept on drinking till four o'clock the next morning: a half-holiday for once! The dead child's father, I ought to say, went home from the saloon at ten o'clock.

I remember another young fellow exactly like this last in age, calling, and temperament. He believed in a higher Being, of whom, however, he had not formed the slightest conception, and to whom he was supremely indifferent. He "believed" merely because he was a man; man must have something to distinguish him from a brute!

These are side-lights upon the tendencies and religious ideas of our growing youth; they confirm my previous estimate. I now return to the characteristics of men of maturer years, clear-sighted social democrats.

It was in the morning, and I had been for several days painfully at work with a hand-drill, boring holes in the heavy iron

work of a circular saw frame, marking them out first with chalk. A machinist, the oldest of the nine foremen, whose work was near mine, came across to me; another man, a hand-worker, soon joined us; finally a third, whom I have already mentioned more than once. The last was a consistent social democrat, much more loyal to the party idea than the other two. We fell into a long conversation.

When I was not looking they rubbed out my chalk-marks on the frame for a joke. I took it in good part when I saw what they had done, and cried out, "Only don't destroy my circle!" "What does that mean?" someone said. I asked if they had never heard the story of Archimedes and the fall of Syracuse. "No," they said, so I told it to them, and explained my quotation.

One of the men asked me whether that had happened at the time of the Trojan War? He knew about the Trojan War—had read all about it, and he began to repeat the Homeric tale, very picturesquely and well. Evidently he had somewhere got hold of a copy of the "Iliad."

Then the talk made a sudden jump to Egypt and the Pharaohs, about whom they all knew something. We spoke of the Pyramids, which especially interested them on account of the workmen who had—with what an incredible toil—piled those vast stones one upon the other.

H. "Those were the beasts of burden, the slaves of four thousand years ago. To-day, we factory hands are the slaves and beasts of burden."

That was going rather too far, I ventured, and instanced the far better general education which everyone now has.

H. disputed the point; the masses were no more uneducated and ignorant than they are, on the average, to-day.

"No; they used to be far cleverer than they are nowadays," broke in another, S., half in jest, half in earnest. "They used to be able to change water into wine." He said this tentatively; I could not discover his real thought.

My foreman laughed outright when he heard it, and H. smiled too, with rather a superior air.

S. went on. "Yes, that's what we believe, but—"

But the foreman cut him short. "What we believe is, that ten pounds of veal makes a good stew."

And S. ventured no reply. The talk ran on, and fell into economic channels, and I happened to make use of the expression "social question." That stung H., who said drily that I didn't know what the social question was.

"May be so," I said. "In fact, it isn't easy to say what it is; we might talk for hours, or days, or weeks about it. Anyhow, it is a monster with many heads and with two sides, the material and the spiritual, just as a man himself is body and soul."

But the foreman and H. began to laugh.

"Soul! There's no such thing. There's a brain, a nervous system that does its work like a machine. Its work, or the results of its work, people to-day call 'soul.'"

"Who has proved that?" I said. "That's only an assumption, an hypothesis not in the least different, in short, from mine. Besides, I have reasons for mine. Take a trumpet, for example, and blow in it; you get a tone. But the tone is something quite apart from the trumpet; and it is so, or at least so it may be, with the brain and the soul. One is the organ, the other is the content (Inhalt) of the organ."

H. hesitated a moment, smiled scornfully, and said, very pertinently, to my assertions at the beginning of this chapter:

"I see! you are all for orthodoxy and the Bible. But the whole of modern science is against them."

"Yes and no," I replied. "And it is neither a man's disgrace nor his misfortune, but the reverse, if he still values the Bible."

"You only get laughed at for it. If you were to say to an educated man what you have said to me, he would just ask what you were, and when he heard 'only a workman,' he would simply laugh at you, and understand why you were such a fool."

Here a fourth joined in the conversation, who, with a worker at the drill-press, had come up to us in the meantime, a manual worker, of whose ideas about religion I must say something, whose

hopelessness and doubt were as great as his longing for faith. He began :

" Yesterday we were packing one of those iron coffins the factory sells now and then out of the old stock. There were three of us at it. We began to argue whether there was any future life. Both the others were positive there wasn't any, so was the superintendent, who came along and began to talk. He said they were right, that a man is like a lighted cigar ; it goes out, and the rest is ashes. Were they right or not? Shall we see each other again or not?"

" Yes, indeed, in *Buxtehude*," laughed H.

" But why do the parsons teach us about it, then?"

" So that men may stay nice and poor, and nice and contented," said he who had spoken of the miracle at Cana ; and the foreman added, approvingly :

" Man is a beast of prey ; yes, worse. A beast of prey only wants to be full ; man wants more than that. If it weren't for the little religion there is in the world, we should have a lot of dead men to put away every morning."

It was the widespread conviction in the factory that the Church, handed down from past ages, inwardly corrupt and dead, is to-day nothing but a very desirable and powerful police system of the existing State, which zealously and skilfully keeps it from falling into ruins.

Finally, after a long discussion, we came to Darwin and his theory of the descent of man from monkeys. The hand-worker and the foreman upheld it ; S. was opposed to it ; H. had nothing whatever to say. S. thought it was impossible, because we have our reason, which separates us absolutely from the brute creation, monkeys and all.

" That's so," said the hand-worker ; " but I believe it, in spite of that. What is there else to believe? Anyhow, I can't swallow the Bible story that man is made of clay."

When the group finally broke up, the hand-worker stayed behind with me, and began to talk, as he often did when we were together, about death and immortality. He had lost a daughter,

a girl half-grown, a short time before, and the longing to see her again left him no peace. He wanted to hear over and over again what I believed and how I felt; and over and over again, when I had given him my best thought, and poured out for him my inmost feeling, he would shake his head and sigh.

"Ah, if we could only believe! But we must have certainty—absolute certainty."

Even this poor heart had no comprehension of a certainty which is not based on sight and hearing, taste and touch.

Another time, one mechanic had sent me on an errand to another.

"Not ready yet; will be ready to-morrow unless the devil gets me first," was the gruff answer to my request.

"There's no devil," interposed a workman near at hand.

"But there is sin," I said.

"Nonsense! That's a contradiction in terms," the first one retorted. "Where there's no devil, there's no sin. Do you still believe the stuff they taught us at school?"

Generally speaking, and the characteristic is a new one, there is no longer the slightest consciousness of guilt or sin; not even among those who are still wavering and struggling with religious doubts, in the very crisis of their development. A sentence from a conversation with an elderly, serious-minded man will illustrate this. He was telling me about taking some trifle, a screw or something, I forget what, from the factory.

"But it's forbidden, so it is stealing," I said, in order to give the conversation the turn I wanted.

"Nay, that's not stealing. We can't steal in a great establishment like this. The bosses can steal from us. Ah, we're poor folks!"

I observed it was very seldom that the workmen took small tools home for their own use, but much oftener I saw them quietly at work in the factory making something for themselves, a pair of hinges, a lock, or what not.

At the inn, too, I heard many an expression of opinion like the last; among others from a man whose story I knew. He had

been very prosperous at one time, but was now a day-labourer, without work or abiding place. He had lost his wife, his three children were grown up, and cared no more for him than he for them. Brandy was his curse. A short time before, in a drunken bout in Dresden, he had lost his valise with a good suit of clothes and good linen.

"I've been too honest, that's why I'm down in the world," he complained. "I haven't been willing to cheat like the rich people. I know their tricks. They can cheat and keep up a good appearance."

"That isn't always so, and when it is so, it is a sin and disgrace just the same," said I.

"Disgrace?" he said; "what is sin and disgrace? Ask those fat gentlemen; see if they know anything about it."

Now for another anecdote from the factory. I was at work with a machinist and the same S. with whom I had the long talk just given. I do not remember just how it was that we began to talk about God, but I did not begin it. The machinist, one of the best paid men in the factory, a broad, thick-set, quiet man, forty or forty-five years old, said that the "lieber Gott" must first be discovered. "Or no, on the whole," he went on, "He *is* discovered. I have an acquaintance in X. whom they call 'lieber Gott.'"

S. was less reserved on this occasion, and contradicted the machinist.

"I believe in a higher Being. I read the whole Bible and a lot of pious books with my parents. I don't read them any longer; the Bible doesn't apply to these times. But I say 'Our Father' every night and every morning, and when I begin my work. To be sure I only say it from habit; my parents taught me to do it when I was little; I know there's no use in it."

Then we began to speak of Luther.

"He did a lot of harm," said S. "He was the first to make the clergy as powerful as they are to-day."

While I was defending Luther from this charge, two other men who were passing stopped to listen to what I was saying. One

was an erecter about thirty years old, the other a worker at the drill-press, both ardent social democrats. The erecter soon interrupted me.

"Luther had his good points, but he had bad ones too, I know that well enough. I've read a book about him."

"What book?"

"'The Priesthood since the XII. Century.'"

"O that's enough! that's a fine book! all lies and scandal."

"That can't be so," was the simple and serious response. "Everything in it must be true, or it would have been suppressed long ago."

The man had evidently in mind the socialist legislation which suppressed all social-democratic writings based on misstatements. The socialist law has borne all sorts of fruit.

The erecter returned to the subject of Luther and the Peasants' War. "First he egged the peasants on, and afterwards he regularly fleeced them. And how he helped the princes! how he flattered them and truckled to them! And it is his doing that the Church has got such a grip on us that we can never get away from it."

Then the worker at the drill-press gave us his views.

"Yes, we must say that much for Luther; he was a clever man. But that was partly because the whole people were so stupid then. Luther wouldn't be much of a man nowadays. All of us now treat the Church and the religious humbug just as he did. At least, I don't trouble myself about the stuff, and I give every church a wide berth."

Then we mentioned Christ. He was the first socialist, and died for his convictions: such was the unanimous opinion.

"But Jesus did not expressly concern himself with private affairs, people's incomes, and trade matters," I ventured. "He wanted first of all to make men good and religious."

"No," the erecter said; "that's not it. That wasn't all Christ wanted. But never mind; religion may have been all right and useful, even necessary in early times when men weren't so far along, but not now. Now we have laws. Whoever keeps

inside the law is a respectable man, whoever doesn't is a rascal."

Here is the true social-democratic ring.

I had one or two more talks of the same kind with these mechanics. I met the former one morning, during the breakfast recess, in the cheese shop I mentioned in the second chapter. Both the shop and the living-room of its proprietor were crowded with our operatives. One of them, a regular customer, wanted ten pfennigs' worth of Limburger and a bottle of beer. As he took it, he said :

"Thanks ; the 'lieber Gott' will pay."

"Then I may wait long enough," was the retort. "That has always been the promise, but He doesn't pay up."

"There isn't any 'lieber Gott,'" said a mechanic who was standing near.

"I believe you!" laughed the woman. "Praying is out of fashion. It doesn't help anybody. Nobody gets anything unless he works for it."

The very same day the erecter called me to him.

"What is it?"

"I'll show you the Lord. Fetch me the long shaft for drilling. You'll soon find out."

"You can't show me the Lord, but I can show Him to you. Shall I?"

"Rather not!" said he, and went off laughing. I met him afterwards at the children's festival in our suburb.

"Why do you bother yourself about that trash?" he asked me abruptly. "You can't prove anything."

I tried to speak of the personal Christ. But he soon interrupted me.

"That's just the way the parsons talk. Religion is only meant for savages. My motto is—

> "'Enjoy life, for when it's done
> You will not have another one.'"

"A fine motto that! It isn't mine."

"But it's mine though. Besides, the parsons are entirely to blame for the way the people hate the Church. They have taken sides with the rich. There is an exception here and there, for example, in Langenberg here."

The contempt for "parsons" (Pfaffen), so frankly expressed here, was as widespread as the nickname for them which everyone used, even the people disposed to be friendly. Nor is it unnatural. The man who sees in the Church only an adventitious public institution, a political and economic tool in the hands of a selfish State, or a sceptical bourgeoisie, naturally has but little reverence or respect for the servants of the Church, who must perforce seem to him only so many hypocrites sacrificing their own opinions to secure a comfortable living. So, as a general thing, the "black-frocks" were not hated, but only despised. They were quite frankly regarded as shirks and idlers, because intellectual labour that produced no immediate, visible, material results was no longer esteemed, and because there was no intelligent understanding of the extent and variety of work which a conscientious and energetic clergyman is bound to undertake. All this feeling came often to very drastic forms of expression, painful enough to me, as for example at the Children's Festival, from the lips of a stranger from some other factory who was present.

He was chatting with a schoolmaster who seemed to have come in without any definite purpose, while I, an unobserved third to the conversation, stood by and listened. The schoolmaster made an attempt, quite dispassionately and professionally, yet with a good deal of cleverness, and without too many words, to give him some better ideas on the subject. But he would have none of them.

"Bah! we are a long way past the Church. I could rant as well as the 'Pfaffe,' if I had the whole week to get ready, as he does. He learns it all by heart out of his books."

His interlocutor explained to him that he was mistaken; that one had to study hard at school and university and pass difficult examinations, but the blatant ass—for such he was—had but one

reply to everything, "Bah!" so that the other soon stopped arguing with him.

I had heard the same thing said in almost the same words during the first days of my stay at the inn. It came from a barber, of whom I shall have more to say, a sort of Quaker, who went from inn to inn in Chemnitz, shaving travellers for five pfennigs, and cutting their hair for ten pfennigs. Pursuing his trade, naturally in the middle of the public room, he was in the habit of talking with the victim under his hands at the moment; it happened once that he spoke of clergymen.

"He has nothing but his profession to live by; he has to stick to that; it's his trade. Of course he can't prove his twaddle; it is only—"

"Stuff and nonsense," the other ended the sentence.

"I don't go to no church," stammered out a half-drunk habitué of the place. "Once did, long ago. I just wanted to take naps there—didn't want worship. Ridic'lous, worship!"

At breakfast once I heard five young men, most of them married, all of them coming to the factory from a village about three miles distant, talking in no flattering terms about their pastor. One of them had spoken casually of the Emperor's income, and had calculated how much he had to spend in a day. The man at his side added:

"Exactly like our pastor, the rascal! He has twenty-seven and a half thalers a week, and yet he isn't satisfied! The parsonage used to be a big farm-house. When he first came to us he made out he was astonished at it! So many rooms! he didn't know where he was to get the furniture! And now he has been in it scarcely six months and he wants a new parsonage; says the old one is tumbling down over his head."

"Yes," broke in a third. "And the chap preaches just twenty-five minutes; looks at his watch every five minutes of the sermon. Then, too, he always says he makes no distinction between rich and poor. Don't he, though! particularly at weddings and christenings. I gave it hot to the 'black-frock' the other day at the tavern; he didn't say a word back to me, but took himself off."

The first speaker began again. "He said once a family could do very well on nine marks a week; he has eighty-three, himself, and doesn't make it do! When he had a child born to him he asked for two hundred marks more per annum on that account. Down with the whole tribe of parsons say I!"

Under this he included Christianity, whose supporter above all the pastor should be.

Meanwhile the fourth man was giving us his experiences at church during his military service, shocking stories, which my own experience confirms. They had fine times, he said, playing "skat"[1] during the sermon, under the benches. Sometimes they got a drink too; they held the bottle under their handkerchiefs and pretended to wipe their nose. There was hearty laughter at this, and then they went on abusing the pastor. I could not control myself any longer, and rightly; but what I said is of no consequence. The point is to show how infinitely cautious and careful a pastor must be, and how careful to give no grounds, reasonable or otherwise, of offence.

The following story of one of our packers proves the same thing. This man was a general favourite; he was already a grandfather, but had little children of his own also, whom he dearly loved and for whom he and his wife worked hard. He was always in good spirits, a simple-hearted, steady fellow. This is what he told me.

"I don't go to church any longer. My little girl—she is eight years old—is always teasing me to go. But I won't do it. I believe in a God who takes care of us; I don't curse, and I won't let anybody else in my presence. I keep my wife and children at church, but I don't go myself. I don't want those chaps to make a fool of me."

"How so a fool of you?"

"O yes, I used to go to church long ago. But early one Sunday morning I met our old parson coming home from hunting" (he was from a village near Chemnitz) "half-an-hour before church time. That was enough for me! I turned round on the

[1] A favourite game at cards.

spot, and I haven't been near a church since. I won't be made a fool of again!"

I must tell one more anecdote, the saddest of all; fortunately, it is one that cannot often be paralleled. This is what was told me by a machinist about thirty years old, one of our greatest wags, who concerned himself very little with either politics or economics.

"In our town—I come from the 'Gebärg'" (*i.e.* the very poor Erzmountain district)—"the pastor went round with loose women and was a drunkard into the bargain; why, he drank up the money that had been got together, none too easy, for a new hearse. To be sure, he had to leave after that. But since that time I can't abide the sight of any of the black-coated scoundrels. I'm willing to admit there may be a Supreme Being, and religion may always be taught. And so long as nothing can be said against a pastor you must keep your tongue still, for he's an important man. But they don't believe themselves what they say! It's just the trade they live by, and they can't be blamed for repeating what the Bible says."

Another, a man well on in years, but a very vague thinker, a blind social democrat, and a very uncouth sort of fellow, once complained to me that the pastors were "just like the lawyers; they gobble up whatever they can get hold of. But people aren't so dull as they used to be, and don't give them everything."

He was probably thinking of the good, easy, comfortable life, which, according to his idea, a pastor leads, and of the presents that all the country people used formerly to bring him; and also, I inferred, of the perquisites which, in Saxony, once made the chief part of a clergyman's living, but which were happily done away with twenty years ago. His whole criticism, however, shows the deep consciousness, among older men, of the social anomalies of the present system. Nor is this all; the discrepancy between the Church fees and the Church functions, as performed by the clergyman, is felt, to-day, to be a social injustice. I heard this grievance once plainly stated by a young married man, of whose political and religious views I know nothing more; the rich, who

could pay for it, he said, had far finer christenings, weddings, and above all, funerals, than the poor workmen. This man was more logical than the other; at least he did not hold the clergyman responsible. On the other hand he expressed a very favourable opinion of the deacon who acted as pastor for our suburb, who was kind and sympathetic, he said, and visited much among the poor. I found this the common feeling about the deacon, but he was always spoken of as an exception; the good opinion was not for the office or the holder of the office, but solely for the man himself, a new and significant indication of the only way in which a shepherd of the people can hope to teach them anything of the nobility, loveliness, and dignity of our Christian faith; namely, the truly sincere and hearty self-devotion of a frank and loyal nature along modest and unobtrusive lines of daily life.

Another confirmation of this is the friendliness with which this same deacon was regarded by a man in the prime of his years, thoroughly under the influence of social democracy. With a volley of oaths he asserted earnestly and emphatically his belief that there was something divine on earth. He had the lowest opinion of Catholicism, which was perfectly explained by the fact that he was a naturalised Bohemian, and had seen the workings of Catholicism in his own country. He vowed he would never marry a woman who was a Catholic, for "they were all under the thumb of the 'Pfaffen.'" This was the more significant, as among the native-born citizens I never found the least trace of intelligence as regards the difference between the creeds, to say nothing of any preference for their own over another.

I may as well record here one half-friendly criticism of the "Pfaffen" as a spot of light among all these shadows. A mechanic, from a neighbouring village, who had fought as a chasseur in the campaign of 1870-71, and who often talked of it with pride and excitement, once said to me, "We ought to let the parsons have their belief, they've studied about it; it isn't everyone that can do that."

His remark becomes significant if we remember that this man, born and bred in a village, looked upon religion as a logically

constructed intellectual theory, to be comprehended by mental exertion and studies too deep, too difficult, too puzzling for him; the real attitude of mediæval Catholicism towards the mysteries of speculative dogma sprung from its union with neo-Platonism. The consequence was that the honest fellow, plainly religious by nature and inclination, was now inwardly bereft and destitute, and visibly under the pressure of social-democratic terrorism in this regard. For, to the remark I have just quoted, he immediately added, "We'll say no more about it; it won't do to talk that way out loud in the factory."

This is the place to say something more in detail about the inner workings of the mind in that group of my fellow-workmen who were directly exposed, with all their doubts and weakness, to the devilish influence of fanatical social democrats just at the fatal moment of transition from the old training and antiquated formulas of belief to the equally inadequate modern half-education and atheism. The struggle was often touchingly evident, especially in minds endowed with religious longings. I will take the case of the manual labourer I have often mentioned. Of a naturally logical turn of mind, he had been in perpetual inward conflict and longing search for light ever since the death of a dearly beloved child; but he was so completely under the spell of the agnostic arguments of social-democratic agitation, in his eyes simply overwhelming, that after every dispute he fell back into hopeless doubt. When he asked me for "certainty, absolute certainty," at the end of the long conversation before my circular saw frame, it was not for the first time. I met him one Sunday morning in the churchyard at his child's grave with his wife, who shared his doubts and his despair. Again I was begged for proof of my belief, my assurance of immortality, and again I spoke in vain, for a few days afterwards, as we were busy with our tedious task of hand-polishing two great steel discs, he began suddenly to talk to me.

"I say! there's nothing in your belief. I was in the churchyard again yesterday and I met two women there. They didn't have much hope of another meeting. They wanted to know where all

the millions of dead people were to go if they all had eternal life!"

I tried once more to combat this idea, widespread among the people, the result of the old, erroneous, intellectual conception of faith. I reminded him of our belief in God's omnipotence, and that we could not and ought not rack our brains about His ways and means, because that way we should never reach our goal; we only needed to hold fast to God's love, of which we have an invincible assurance in the person of Jesus Christ. But he went on:

"Yes, it must be fine if anyone can really believe, for life and for death. But it's no sin not to believe. It comes to the same thing, just as the Catholics and the Jews and the Turks really have the same belief at bottom." And from this view he was not to be dissuaded.

Another time in a small cosy "Kneipe" (beer hall) he told me with bitter earnestness the following story, most significant of his mental condition:

"When our child died, you know, the deacon came right over to comfort us. We ought to pray to God for strength and consolation he said. 'That's what we did all the time she was ill,' my wife said to him, 'and it did no good, she died.' And what do you think he said? 'But your prayer was, "Father! Thy will, not mine, be done!"' See there! These people always have an answer ready."

Again, I found him once, in the very beginning of my factory experience, in eager discourse with four others, all of the same turn of mind, and all, like himself, in doubt and distress. We were cleaning a large planing machine that had become foul, and I paid no attention to what they were saying at first. I was down on my knees clearing away filings when one of them spoke loudly and vehemently.

"No, no! you can't make me believe that. I know there is a Supreme Being."

He was the only man in the whole factory who still frankly and honestly acknowledged the proofs of Christianity. This modern

martyr told me that on this account he was the butt of everybody during his first years in the works, and that he had had a great deal to endure, but that they had now given him up as a hopeless case, and let him go quietly his own way, without showing him any ill-feeling.

When I heard his emphatic "No" I looked up, naturally somewhat startled. They saw my bewilderment, and one of the men began to explain.

"They often have talk like that, those two, and I like to listen to them. I've lost a child myself, so my thoughts run that way. Is faith all imagination as most of the men say? or is it all a sham when the parsons talk and preach about it? Why doesn't God do miracles nowadays? Why does He allow so much unhappiness? Why do things go wrong with so many good people?"

"Well, when things go wrong with me I just cut loose from 'em," added another. But a fifth man exclaimed:

"Can't you stop talking about that stuff?"

But the "professor," who always made an effort to give some answer, good or bad, such as was possible to his own naturally vague and crude belief, and who found himself, in this case, supported by the others, quickly silenced him.

"You be quiet! You are just a half-devil, exactly like a beast that bolts its food and goes to sleep and wants nothing else."

It was not quite so bad as that! The last man who had spoken was rather a type of another group of former farm hands who still lived in the villages not far off. He told me afterwards that he thought the clergyman usually talked bosh, but that he went to church pretty often for all that; had stayed away lately because he had no good clothes. This discloses another Catholic trait of the church-going habit, particularly in the country; men go to church, but not from any inward incentive. The mere fact of going, this perfunctory visit to the Blessed Lord, is a good work and sufficient in itself. The Blessed Lord and the church with its pastor, who is paid to be good and devout, will take care of the rest.

Church attendance among the factory hands was naturally at its minimum. The genuine social democrat, the man who was

really such, or who wanted to pass as such, never went to church, of course, although not many of them had formally taken the step of separation. Indeed, if I remember, the machinist who had so dogmatically pronounced judgment on Luther was the only one who had done so. He made himself particularly merry in my presence over the weakness and feebleness of church members. They were, he said, so dead-and-alive that the very parson complimented the man who had left on the courage of his convictions. The rest had no convictions whatever; they were indifference itself. Was he really so far wrong? Was not what he said another proof of that which we are without and which we must have, a living, strong, Christian community?

But though of all these poor doubting souls, tossed helplessly between these two conceptions of life, sighing and despairing, yet with a great longing on the part of most of them for light and peace, very few went to church, and they but seldom, all the more often they went to the churchyard to mourn beside their graves. My much-quoted manual labourer, for example, told me that he had been to church only once in five years, whereas, in earlier days at home, he was used to going every Sunday. But that was now a thing of the past; he never thought of it now when Sunday came. The whole modern social Sunday life of an inhabitant of a factory suburb is on a different plan even when, as in Saxony, the so-called Sabbath rest is nearly everywhere actual rest from labour. Another workman expressed this clearly enough. He, too, was from the country, or rather from the "Gebärg," was employed in our factory and lived in our suburb. He was one of the few who did not sneer openly at the pastor, although he had no great liking for him.

"We always went to church at home," he said to me with perfect simplicity; "it was a disgrace not to go. But since I've been here I don't go; it isn't the fashion here, and besides we would rather have a good game of 'skat' on Sunday mornings."

Would this be possible—it is typical of the whole state of affairs—if the life of the country churches were really active, the preaching really powerful, and abreast of the times? If it were so, the

longing for church and for the Word of God would irresistibly draw hearts like these to church, even in their new and unfavourable surroundings. But even they who have kept fragments of its teaching have long outgrown the church, because they have found in it only a kindred companion to the school, and not the sanctuary whence man—even the toiler in factories—may draw peace, happiness, and the strength to bear his daily lot.

Here is what a lathe-tender once said to me—a quiet man, rather reserved, but an independent thinker:

"I hardly ever go to church. We had enough of that in school. We must have church; without it the Devil would have everything his own way. That's what I don't like about the social democrats, they storm so against the churches. My father-in-law feels just as I do. Most of the parsons preach to the rich people just as they do to us. But if nobody listens to them, how can they help matters?"

There is some truth in this, as well as in what another man—a genuine son of the soil—said to me.

"I believe in a Supreme Being and in a destiny. I say my prayers just as I learned them when I was little; I couldn't go to sleep at night without saying, 'Our Father,' although I know there's no use in it. But I don't believe any more of it—least of all in another life; Christ was just a socialist. I don't go to church any more to hear the parson; all he has to tell me I learned long ago in the confirmation class at school."

The two men I have last quoted belong to a distinct, not very numerous, group, the soundest and strongest natures of all. But even they, almost all of them country bred, cannot escape the crisis which draws them into its vortex with the rest. But since neither the old nor the new culture, neither the old nor the new creed can satisfy them, and because they cannot do without something of the sort, they have formulated a philosophy for themselves, often, indeed, of the strangest sort, a jumble of old and new, based on their own criticism and examination, and incorporating many a relic of the past. They are, of course, under the influence of their social-democratic companions, in face of

whom their convictions and their arguments cannot generally stand proof. For this reason they do not like to show their true colours, and they keep pretty much in the background, acting in concert with the social democrats in order not to expose themselves to the scorn and derision against which they are helpless and defenceless; and for this reason also, they rarely express themselves with frankness except to men of whose feelings they are assured, and even then chiefly in *tête-à-tête*. But these men also are without the warmth of a living faith, without the consciousness that Christianity is in itself an outward power and an inward peace, an unearthly and a super-earthly joy. Even to them what they have saved is only a bit of intellectual culture, a fragment of learning and old habit.

"O the d—d parsons!" one of these men said suddenly, when I asked him if there were a church in his suburb.

"What do you mean?"

"They're all big hypocrites—bigger than all the rest of us. I won't have them talking to me."

"You can't prove the first of those statements, and as for the rest of what you say, they are people who have learned more than any of us in the factory. It wouldn't hurt you to listen to them; we ought to learn from everybody."

The workman looked sharply at me in surprise; but when he saw which way my feelings went, he changed his tone. For "parsons" in general, to be sure, he had not a single good word to say, but he spoke warmly and affectionately of an individual, Pastor Würkert in Zschoppaŭ, who had confirmed him.

"Nowadays I like a good book better than going to church; I get more out of it. But I couldn't go if I wanted to, I haven't time. I have to help my wife get dinner for our lodgers; we have a good many. Well! last year was our silver wedding, and I went to communion then with my wife."

"That's rather different from what you said just now!" said I.

"Oh, yes! I'm not like the regular socialists who drop a coffin into the ground at a funeral, and then off with them! I listen quietly to what the pastor says and try to learn something. And

it isn't right for the socialists to try to get us out of the Church. I've been baptised; I'll stick to that!"

"One must stick to something," I said.

"I have my own belief," he went on. "I don't believe all that's in the Old Testament. That about the creation of the world. And I don't believe everything in the New; but what it says about God and the Saviour—that's true."

There were two Catholics in this last category. One was an Austrian who had lost his employment in Bohemia, and had been in our factory in Chemnitz for a year and a half, first as a manual labourer, then as a worker at the drill-press. He had no longer any anxiety about money; he had no children, and his wife earned something, so that he was always in good spirits. This man had listened to the long talk over the circular saw, but had said very little. Only once he had joined in with a mocking remark made by one of my opponents. Shortly before I left the works I had an opportunity to speak with him again, privately, on religious matters, when his tone was quite different. He told me that he went to church with his wife quite often; last year, he said proudly, he had been four times, of course to a Protestant church. It was, indeed, a good deal to do under the circumstances. He praised the Protestant service very much, especially the wedding service, where there was such a fine discourse. He no longer believed in the Saints or the Virgin Mary, but he had a firm faith in God and in Jesus Christ.

The character and the devotional tendencies of his fellow-believer were of a more doubtful nature. He was a childless widower over fifty years of age; but he meant to marry again, which did not prevent him, however, from leading a loose life whenever he found opportunity. He had been for a long time private messenger of a Board of Missions under a Saxon superintendent, and went to church, he told me, once in three or four weeks. "But don't tell of it," he added, "or it would be the worse for me here."

The same thing was true of a young man from Hamburg, about thirty years old. He, too, had spoken casually in no flattering

terms of the Church and the Christian religion, and he, too, in my last days in the works, when he had come to know me, took a different tone.

"You see, I'm not the same man when I get out of this factory," he confessed to me once, quite voluntarily. "I believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, yes, and in miracles too; why, I have had miracles happen to me! If I don't have anything to do Sunday morning, I go to church with my wife. Only it won't do to let them know it in the factory here."

I do not know if these were his real feelings. He was a handsome young fellow, who took life lightly and carelessly, and was very much swayed by his wife, who was just his own age, and as clever and energetic as she was jealous. I had not much confidence in him. He told me once, quite frankly, that he never meant to betray his real opinion; that was the best way! At one time he assured me that he was not a social democrat; at another, that he was going to resign our Social-Democratic Campaign Club.

When, after the foregoing speech, I told him that if such were his real convictions he ought not to deny them, but to confess them frankly and openly, he stared at me without the least comprehension of my meaning.

But enough of these gloomy details, which I could easily supplement by many more. I believe, however, that those I have given will thoroughly establish my position. There is no escaping the conclusion that the materialistic influence of social democracy has nowhere so fundamentally destroyed the received ideas and impressions of the working man as in the sphere of religion. The old forms and images in which the beliefs of Christendom have hitherto been handed down are, for the bulk of our wage-earners under the capitalistic system of production, for ever broken. And with the form, the spirit which alone is the essence and the work of the form, is for many also gone. A world without God is growing up under our eyes; a world whose horizon is continually growing wider, and whose icy chill and desolation is creeping over many souls who still waver and struggle and despair, who in their

inmost depths reject the barren teachings of a materialistic philosophy. Forsaken by their church, without help, without enlightenment, without support or guidance, surrounded by an atmosphere of socialistic thought from which there is no escape, they are all dying a lingering and often a torturing spiritual death.

One thing alone is left to them—respect and reverence for Jesus Christ. To even the most fanatical social democrats and haters of creeds this much remains; to them, perhaps, even more surely than to many who are not formally pledged to social democracy. Their conception of Jesus of Nazareth is not that which the world has had till now; in their eyes He is without the halo which the Church has set on His glorious brow; they smile at the divinity "imputed" to Him by theologians. For them He is the great social reformer who sought by means of religion, but in vain, to bring in that Golden Age to the world for which they, too, are striving; which they, more fortunate than He, will surely inaugurate! But before His great personality they are all hushed and still.

CHAPTER VII.

MORAL CONDITIONS.

THE moral attributes of my fellow-workmen were, even more clearly than their social or political or religious tendencies, the combined result of the old Christian code of morality, the new social order not yet raised to the Christian standard, social-democratic teachings, and the human passions only half subdued, which seethe and ferment in every mortal breast.

The first of these four agencies needs no further comment. The moral law, whose fulfilment revealed to us in the historical person Jesus of Nazareth has been ever since the firm foundation of all education in Christian lands, is still the largest factor in the ethics of the working men with whom I came into contact, and is, often quite unconsciously to themselves, firmly implanted in their hearts. It still remains for them the measure and test of thought and action, as the power of conscience, the invisible court of appeal whose verdict is often set aside, it is true, evaded or silenced, but whose intangible authority is recognised, nevertheless, as a self-evident and natural control. The ideas of Christian morals, to be sure, like the religious truths of salvation in our creed, are rather drilled into the mind than inwardly recognised and appropriated by it in all their beauty and irrefragibleness. But, in teaching ethics, this method is far more necessary and therefore less hurtful than in teaching religion; ethical ideas can be so deeply impressed upon the soul as to become an actual part of the character, never to be wholly dispossessed; they remain, however, faintly in the heart when the last trace of religious emotion is effaced from it, although in losing the latter they have lost their strongest vindication, their ever new proof of authority

and truth, their mightiest impulse and most direct incentive. Too often they harden to a mere outer shell, within which the spark of the moral life glimmers but faintly. But however faint, it is still there; it is still, consciously or unconsciously, the more or less cogent standard of conduct even for the factory hand; and for the moral condition which prevails among these men it is still the source whence their attributes flow.

Certainly no more among these men than any others do they flow in undimmed brightness and purity. The new confused social relations, determined only by the interests of the stronger, in which the new class of wage-labour under capitalistic production finds itself, have, indeed, a mighty influence, if not, as the "science" of social democracy believes, an all-powerful one. Think for a moment of the incomes and the homes of the working men as I have described them; under such conditions it becomes almost impossible for the average man to realise the beautiful old Christian ideal of the family, about which we hear so much from the pulpit, let him try as he may. Think of the eleven or twelve hours of toil in a noisy, stifling factory; it is not so easy to apply here those evangelical ideas about labour which we so often proclaim! How can work like this bring inner peace and contentment to any man? How can it be the means to develop his character, and make him a complete and harmonious human creature, full of happy activity and conscious of his destiny? Think how the daily struggle for existence often compels the daily absence of both parents from home, as well as the presence of strangers in the household, sometimes coarse and lawless people, and how this must interfere with any sort of regular training of children. Think, moreover, of the disproportionally large earnings of absolutely uncontrolled young people, and how it must inevitably lead to the levity, vulgarity, and extravagance so frightfully common among them. But I need not illustrate my meaning further. All this has been done by others, often enough and circumstantially enough. Here it is sufficient to point out once again that these things are largely the results of the anarchical industrial conditions which capitalistic production,

with its disregard of moral considerations and human worth, has brought about.

And these results must be the more destructive of moral qualities in the working man, because religion, morality's best support, began to disappear at the same time; and in its place, and hastening its final extinction, we have the teachings of social democracy substituted as a scheme for the conduct of life.

We have seen that social democracy has a new anti-Christian conception of life. It has, correspondingly, a new anti-Christian code of ethics, if ethics that can be called according to which the ideals of morality are but other names for the ideals of custom. But these ideals are created exclusively by those economic conditions in which any given class may for the moment be living. Each class has, therefore, its own morality, which changes with the economic level. It follows that there is no moral law, eternally binding, implanted from on high in the souls of men; no moral action for the sake of God and conscience, but only for the sake of outward circumstance; in other words, of worldly advantage. Social democracy, indeed, demands a theoretic observance of this morality for, and from, each individual respecting his fellow; but here again it is only for the sake of individual advantage, which would be lost sight of were the lines too tightly drawn and one man's comfort bought at the price of another's, who would then turn and rend his neighbour. The useful, not the good, according to the doctrine of social democracy, is the impelling motive of all moral conduct. Exactly in accordance with the spirit of the Manchester school of political economy, social democracy, although in other terms and for other reasons, proclaims self-interest as the God who rules us all. Needless to say that such a principle must have strange and sad effects upon the moral character of the wage-earning class, already weakened as it is by imperfect religious sensitiveness and by social disorganisation, effects which are not lessened by the fact that the philosophical and ethical teachings of social democracy are clearly understood by but a few among the mass of workmen. If they do not grasp the doctrine they feel its spirit like a new atmosphere

which has enveloped them ever since the social-democratic agitation began to make itself felt, and which they can no more escape than they can escape the physical air they breathe. The agitation itself is the best realisation of this new spirit. It is the spirit of utter indifference to distinctions of right and wrong; to which all ways and means are acceptable, provided only they do not injure the party cause; it is the spirit of unbridled violence, which does not hesitate to rouse in other minds its own elemental passions of hatred and bitterness, or to employ methods of calumny and tyranny if any advantage to the party may be reaped thereby; it is the spirit of conscious, calculating misrepresentation, clear-headed and cold-blooded, which, in the interests of the party, declares certain existing evils and certain transitory conditions to be the ideal foundations of the new social order, constructs and completes them in theory, and projects them into the life of the people as new principles, giving them thus double power to render the pernicious conditions more harmful, the transitory conditions chronic, and weakening by their means the Christian and moral sense of the working class and making them less capable of resisting attack. I refer to the social-democratic theory of marriage and its denunciation of thrift.

It is true that the agitation also sets in play ideal forces in the soul; enthusiasm for a new and broad culture, endeavour to rise above stupefying industrial conditions, belief in the high mission, political and economic, of the Fourth Estate, and the consciousness, albeit exaggerated, of the claims of universal brotherhood far beyond the limits of their own nation. But even these ideal forces lose a great part of the good and civilising influence which they might actually have, because of the way in which they are brought to bear; because they are held at the service of a utilitarian morality, and abused and debased by an agitation which recognises nothing beyond the interests of class and party.

And now add to all this the thousand different temperaments with which nature has endowed these working men, temperaments more archetypal than in any other class, because less fixed in definite social limitations: the many inborn peculiarities for good

and evil, the varied hopes and interests of each individual life, the passions which ferment in the heart and sometimes burst forth irresistibly; in a word, take men as they are, with all their sins and grievances, desires and prejudices, each one unlike his fellow-man, each one an entity in himself, and take into account, besides, the workings of that higher moral law impressed upon the soul in youth, then the often wretched lot under which they groan, and the biased teachings of social democracy, persuasive as air—and the sum of all will present an approximate picture of the moral condition which actually exists in the labouring community I studied. It is a confusion of good and evil; a tragic mixture of accountabilities reflected in thousands of personalities in a thousand different lights and shadows. It is then idle to believe, as is sometimes asked of us, that it is possible to give a fair picture of working men's morals by presenting isolated striking details. A long study is needed, a keen psychological analysis, and, above all, a profound sympathy with the workman's lot, before we can justly appreciate or describe the whole reach of his moral character, or take the measure of his soul. On the basis of a three months' study I cannot presume to do this; I can only touch on a few points which particularly struck me, and I leave the picture to be filled out by later workers in the same field.

As the first of these points, I must, for truth's sake, place one fact which naturally connects itself with what I have just been saying. It cannot be taken for granted that the fanatical social democrats are the workmen of loosest morals, nor that those who have least to do with social democracy are the most upright men. The case is quite as likely to be just the reverse. A man of fine and serious nature, into whose youthful heart the lessons of good parents and conscientious teachers have deeply sunk, who has developed an earnest character, full of lofty aspiration, cannot be corrupted either by oppressive social conditions or the teachings of social democracy; rather, the one will confirm his energy and his power of resistance, and the other will fill him with a high enthusiasm from which its own evils will harmlessly rebound. Even in the small circle under my observation, there were a

number of such natures, whose type is August Bebel; men of parts and of perfect integrity, sound to the core, but intoxicated with the results of modern science, whose true conclusions as to past and future, however, their imperfect education prevents them from drawing, filled also with enthusiasm for the ideal which may be educed from materialism, as well as from any abstract principle, and only lightly touched by the poison, blighting to every moral capacity, which it exhales as well. Let me illustrate what I mean by referring to what a commercial traveller, a wine-merchant, once told me about his forty customers in Chemnitz, all prosperous working men, who each bought of him a keg of wine annually, paying cash down for it, a thing almost unheard of in his business. He declared that they were the most scrupulous of men in every particular, thrifty and industrious, good husbands and fathers, quiet, hard-working members of the community; they were, one and all, ardent social democrats. This description may be rather glowing, but it is substantially true. I can vouch for the same sort of men in the circle of my own acquaintance. They guarded their reputations with jealous care; it was a point of honour among them to be morally irreproachable men and good citizens. Yet they were social democrats who had shaken off every vestige of traditional Christianity. On the other hand, there were a great many of my mates—let me refer to Chapter V.—who had little or nothing to do with social democracy, and who were utterly good-for-nothing; the loudest brawlers, the most unstable characters, who shamelessly neglected their families when they had any, were never long in any one situation, etc. etc. And then, between these two extremes, there were the few who sedulously shunned all social democratic influences, and strove to be good men, and the many social democrats who stood on the moral plane—not a very high one!—of the average mass of working men. Taken as a whole, they prove the justice of my caution against attributing the low state of morals prevailing among our wage-earning population to-day exclusively to the action of social democracy. The social-democratic spirit is like the foul and heavy air of the factory; sound lungs are not

hurt by it, but for weak ones, it is a perpetual menace of consumption. Here is our real danger; the moral natures of the majority of men are weak and imperfectly developed, so that, in their case also, social democracy has only to give the finishing touch.

I should like to say something about the way in which the people spend their money. I cannot, indeed, enter into details of the domestic economy of the working man, though they would be the only ground for an exhaustive criticism on this point. But, generally speaking, I observed that a very low wage, say twenty-five pfennigs per hour, or about seven hundred and fifty marks yearly, leads quite as often, in the case of a large family, to the most painful and heroic economies as to the unthrift of despair; at any rate, a housekeeping which cannot be regarded as normal, but one which will vary according to the character of the husband and wife. Again, I noticed that with a larger yearly wage, the great majority are inclined to lead decent and well-ordered lives, whose needs are of a higher and better kind, and that this inclination in most cases is more or less successfully carried out. Among such persons, even if they are social democrats, there are evidences of a certain satisfaction and a sort of happy contentment, which they also want to win for their less fortunate fellows, whose cause they make their own. It is less easy to speak hopefully of the young, that is to say, the grown lads and the unmarried men. The greater part of them simply live from day to day. What they have they must squander; and it is chiefly squandered on their own pleasures. For a married man with children it is evidently not easy to lay by anything, even with the higher wage of twelve hundred marks or over; but for a bachelor earning the like sum it should surely be a simple matter. Yet the unmarried man is least often the one to save anything from his earnings. I speak from common report, but I know that it is true, at least of the city-born factory-hand, whose father had been a factory-hand before him. In his gay and happy-go-lucky life he greatly resembles his brother of the student class, and must also get through with a harvest of wild oats before he settles down into the life-long

Philistinism of the married bread-winner. The case is somewhat different with the young fellows who come to the factory from the country, or from good provincial circles. In each of these groups I knew men who were earnest and industrious, prudent and economical. With the first-named group it could be accounted for by the fact that the men, remembering the country wage to which they had been used, felt themselves very prosperous, and their modest wants supplied, yet left a large margin which acted as a spur to further saving; while those of the second group were urged to prudence from home, as well as by their own desire for a better technical training, for independence, and for the greater degree of comfort to which they had been accustomed. How far—to return to the subject—many fathers of families carry their minute economies is proved by the fact that many of them revive the old customs of primitive people, and do within their own household all the work usually given to outsiders, doing it often with a great deal of practical skill. Thus it was a habit almost universal to pick up old bits of leather and broken shoes, and to do the cobbling for themselves and their families, besides making their own wooden shoes; to be their own carpenter, cabinet-maker, or locksmith when occasion required, to cut the children's hair, and so on; I need not enumerate further. In the same way, the man who had learned a trade, but had, for whatever reason, given it up permanently for the better-paid factory employment, not infrequently practised it on Sundays and holidays for the benefit of his friends, working more cheaply than anyone else would have done. So here, under cover of capitalistic production in new conditions never before present, we have the reappearance of the small handicrafts, but whether as a survival or a new departure, I leave to the riper judgments of experts to decide.

As to the indebtedness of my fellow-workmen I cannot speak very positively. I often heard it said that "Every workman is in debt," but, to be frank, I never knew exactly what this meant. I believe that every working man's family towards the end of the fortnightly wage-period was more or less frequently obliged to ask for credit from various tradesmen, but I also believe that such

indebtedness was usually cleared off on the next pay-day. Heavier and more irksome debts, which could be discharged but very slowly even when both man and wife were prudent and industrious, were those incurred by reason of long illnesses or deaths in the family, or the husband's loss of employment or his somewhat long service in the reserve-corps. Borrowing from one another is unknown among workmen, at least I saw but one tentative and perfectly vain effort in this direction. One thing more deserves mention, the propensity, namely, of all working men to make some especial outlay on Sundays and pay-days, and on the occasion of the Chemnitz yearly fair. These were their holidays, and it has become a matter of course that the people must "have their fling" at such times, everybody after his own fashion. The manner in which each man spent his money was a perfectly good gauge of his moral culture. There were abstemious or ill-paid or sorely burdened people, or those with many children, for whom a cigar or a glass of Bavarian beer was enough on pay-day evening when the wage was given out; there were others who spent the evening, sometimes alone, sometimes with their wives, in "going out," that is, to the beer saloons, indulging in more or less tippling, and coming home more or less affected by it; and there were others yet who, perhaps in Sunday clothes, perhaps in working dress, went from saloon to rum-shop, from rum-shop to "Kneipe," till they were thoroughly drunk. The younger skilled workmen, with good earnings, made up a large proportion of the latter number. I saw for myself how young fellows who received a fortnightly wage of thirty-five or forty marks, ate, drank, smoked, gambled and otherwise squandered eight or ten marks of it in a single evening. I saw, too, how some of them spent no more than fifteen pfennigs, though this is an unusually small expenditure. The general outlay was from one and a half to two marks, but almost always proportionately larger than the wage warranted. The same thing was to be observed at the time of the yearly fair, when we were given a holiday, and everyone was allowed an advance of ten marks for family purchases. Many took advantage of this advance, and actually

bought some useful articles, but gave themselves a little treat out of the money as well, although they knew how sorely they must feel the deduction of ten marks from their next payment. And the expenditure for Sunday amusements, though not so general and regular, is the same tendency in another guise.

I must say a word or two about the use of alcohol. I found it in its most frequent and repulsive form in the working men's inns. The genuine tramp, whom I briefly described in Chapter I., is almost without exception a hard drinker; two or three of them were always to be found in the Chemnitz Inn, in a state of beastly intoxication. But even among the other guests, with the exception of the young journeymen just out of their time, there was a great deal of drinking at every opportunity, and brandy was always preferred to beer. The barber whom I have already mentioned told me that he used to be always full of liquor, so that he had a loathing for everything else, and in consequence his hand shook so that he couldn't hold his razor. For some time, he said, he had not touched a drop; he had accustomed himself gradually to do without it. I do not know how far this statement can be vouched for, but I give it for what it is worth, in view of the generally received assumption that a brandy-drinker cannot possibly reform. In the factory, too, there was another man, a workmate of my own, who had formerly used spirituous liquor, but who now never tasted it, urge him as one might.

In this respect the state of things among the regular factory operatives was a much better one. There were, to be sure, even in our work, a few red noses to be seen, betokening the steady or periodic hard drinker. But, compared with the whole, they were a very small minority constantly diminishing, and it was evident that they were under a cloud in the eyes of their mates. When one such workman had an attack of delirium tremens one day in our midst, and had to be carried out, I heard not a word of pity or sympathy, but a great many harsh and severe expressions. In this way the old prohibition of schnaps [1] drinking during work hours has done good service, although it was instituted solely in

[1] Schnaps, distilled spirits, somewhat like brandy.

the interests of production and the trade; in consequence of it, however, no distilled liquor was used in our factory, with very few exceptions, but, as I have said, a great deal of light beer, perfectly harmless, and only taken to allay thirst. Among our operatives, even outside the works, there was none of the daily beer-drinking so universal among the middle class in the shape of idle lounging about restaurant tables. The average factory hand in Chemnitz seldom went out on week-day evenings except to the meetings of his club and on pay-days. If the weather permitted he took a stroll in the fields near at hand; there was no glass of beer for him at the end of the evening, in most cases, simply because he had not the money for it. But when anything was going on, like the yearly fair or a Sunday pleasuring, there was plenty of drinking. Everybody drank with everybody else; they could carry a surprising quantity! And in almost every case there must be a glass of schnaps for a finish, although on such occasions very little was taken alone. Very many of the men knew no bounds when they had once begun to drink, but were like all children or savages who cannot be moderate either in gaiety or grief. Many among them would not leave off till they were thoroughly drunk. Indeed, for many, this was the goal and height of enjoyment, and it was very seldom that such drunkenness was regarded as shameful, not to say sinful. I often talked with the men about it, and found the opinion unanimous that to be drunk now and then is no disgrace. "Rich people do the same thing, only secretly; we do it openly." In the course of one such conversation I nearly got into a quarrel—it was the first and last I had—with a couple of good fellows, sound on every other subject. They grew thoroughly angry with me for my opinion to the contrary. The situation may be summed up about as follows: The use of liquor has grown to be a pest among the "tramp" part of the population, but the permanently established working class in any place, as I knew it, consume much more beer than brandy; they take, in fact, a great deal of beer, but they can seldom be properly called hard drinkers.

Now a word about the dance halls. Almost every Sunday

evening I visited one or more—eight or ten, perhaps, in all. Some were quite refined, some very low in character. The worst that I saw was the "Kaiserkrone" in Chemnitz, significantly nicknamed "Bloody Bones" in common parlance. There the pleasures of the dance and the joys of a free fight could be combined. There were collected the very dregs of the social order, prostitutes and factory girls of the degraded type with their gallants, young workmen and soldiers from the Chemnitz garrison. I would lay stress on this last fact, and I take it upon myself to earnestly call the attention of the military authorities to the need of forbidding to the soldiery not merely those places of assembly which are notoriously hot-beds of social democracy, but, above all, spots of moral infection like these, where a decently dressed man without a companion can seldom remain unmolested. I was there with one of my mates, somewhat less than an hour, but how many times in our brief stay were we not indecently accosted by women, or jostled by them in the grossest manner! There is no alternative in such a place but to accept the situation and be as low as the rest, or to exchange words and, finally, blows. We avoided both horns of this dilemma by prudently withdrawing. The youthful landlord met us as we were leaving, and asked us why we were going; had we not been pleased? We mumbled something in reply, upon which he said, with an air of pride: "Yes, the place had pretty well run down under my father, but now, thank God! I've got it on its feet again."

The "Colosseum" in Kappel presented a great contrast to this. That was the most imposing of all the dance-halls that I saw, both as regards its appointments and proportions, its music and its *clientéle*. Here were to be found not only young mechanics earning a high wage, some of them from our own works, but merchants and lawyers, and even, I was assured, officers in civilian's dress. Among the fair sex one might meet all sorts of shop girls and saleswomen, with the better class of prostitutes, but there were few servants or factory girls. It was really very like a ball-room! The ladies—many a lovely daughter of Eve among them!—were in fashionable toilettes, often very expensive, and

almost always in good taste; the gentlemen were also well dressed, if not always in correct evening black, and they were, one and all, easy in their manners and motions and full of youthful grace. The workmen were hardly distinguishable from the rest, save by the absence of the pince-nez and by their larger and coarser hands. Nobody wore gloves. It was usual for ladies when they were asked to dance, to silently hold out a handkerchief to their partners, so that the hot hand which clasped their waist might leave no stain of perspiration there.

The other dance-halls which I investigated held, I should say, a position mid-way between these two. Most of them were suburban, half-city, half-country in character, as also in the public they attracted. The modish clothes of city workmen and workwomen were interspersed among unpretending village costumes; the girls often wore their kerchiefs and gay-coloured aprons. The music, too, was more old-fashioned, and the entrance fee lower, only twenty-five pfennigs, while the charge at the "Colosseum," if I remember rightly, was fifty pfennigs. Of course, here as elsewhere, every dance called for another charge of ten pfennigs; it was easy to spend three or four marks in a single evening on dancing alone. The tone in these balls was rather freer than in the other; the dancers sang to the music, and their shouts and hurrahs resounded far beyond the room. Often the crowd was so dense and the heat so intolerable that every forehead was streaming with perspiration, and glass after glass was emptied. But then it was that the gaiety was at its height and the evening most successful.

In these respects, but only in these respects, the better dance-halls were the more decently conducted. The jokes and laughter at single tables, among small knots of acquaintances, were all the noisier, the caresses and embraces in sly nooks and corners of the hall and balconies were all the more shameless. In one and the other were the same gay and glowing faces, often beautiful ones, the same brilliantly sparkling eyes, powerful figures, rounded youthful forms. In one and the other were unbridled merriment, increasing tumult, sensual excitement, which reached its climax

and its abrupt arrest when, at the stroke of twelve, the music stopped, the hall was emptied, the lights extinguished. Then couple after couple would silently withdraw for a midnight stroll to the fields, where the stars are their only witnesses, or to sweetheart's doorway, or straight to sweetheart's chamber and bed. For, according to my observation, such is, if not the universal, at least the vastly more common ending to the Sunday dance. In these halls, in the nights from Sunday to Monday, our labouring youth is losing to-day not only its hard-earned wages, but its best strength, its ideals, its chastity. It is no wonder; the wonder would be if it were not so. Think for a moment what it is to spend the week, day after day, in the monotonous routine of the ugly factory, often at uninteresting work, in dirt and sweat, no comfortable resting-place at the noon hour, no resource at evening save the street before the door, the court-yard of the lodging-house or its small and crowded living-room with noise of children and smell of cookery; to spend the nights in wretched sleeping-quarters; to earn no more than enough for all daily needs; to be without oversight, without control, without parental care and love; in a word, without the blessed influence of family ties, with the vigour of youth in every limb, the ardency of youth in heart and head—and then think of the Sunday with its long hours of sleep and complete relaxation, with its freedom which no one curtails, and whose true use there is no one to teach; when the strains of music allure, fresh young faces laugh on every side, lights gleam, spacious and gaily decorated rooms with their arched and lofty ceilings offer a welcome! Here may be found amends for the hateful monotony of the week; here, in one evening, in one night, compensation hundred-fold for the hundred hideous impressions of all the rest. Is it strange then, that unrestrained as they are, these young people plunge into the splendid, maddening whirl, to glut their souls upon its delights, to lose the best of themselves within its vortex? I bring neither accusation nor excuse; I only present the facts in their nakedness, and show what needs must be their result.

I believe that in the whole labouring class of Chemnitz it would

be hard to find a young man or a young woman, over seventeen, who is chaste. Sexual intercourse, largely the product of these dance-halls, has assumed enormous proportions among the youth of to-day. It is regarded quite simply as natural and customary; there is seldom a trace of consciousness that it can be looked upon as a sin. The seventh commandment does not exist for them, in this respect. True, it is very rarely that they have anything to do with paid prostitutes. That is considered a disgrace, and such women are despised. But almost every young fellow has his sweetheart, and almost every girl her lover, between whom, with very few exceptions, sexual relations are a matter of course. No young man, moreover, feels himself bound to one single girl, nor is it usual to be so. Likewise, the young girl is looked upon with slight disfavour who gives herself too promptly on acquaintance, and with such a girl no lasting connection is formed. When pregnancy occurs, the couple usually marry, whether the connection is of long standing or but of a week or two; whether they know each other well or not, whether they are congenial or not, whether, in other respects, they are exemplary or worthless. Chance and passion decide marriage for our young people, seldom either love or inner fitness or well-considered reasons.

This fact, above all others, explains the unhappiness of marriage in the labouring class, the complaints of all, even social democrats, who really seek the people's good, the longing for the elevation and the emancipation of women, and the new social-democratic ideal of marriage. Let me refer to the close of my second chapter. The wife, in many a man's eyes, is in fact only the means of satisfying sexual desire, a drag to his getting on, or, at best, if everything goes well, a capable manager of the household, who holds a tight rein even upon her husband's expenditures. Marriage, according to the expressed opinion of more than one of my fellow-workmen, is "the last and greatest folly a man can commit." There is a better state of things than this in many a family, and between many a married pair there is a gradual growth of mutual respect and affection. Nay, in spite of all that I have said I know several really beautiful marriage relations founded

on sincere love, but the fact, broadly speaking, remains, that in the labouring class the wife is far less valued, far less respected, and far worse treated than in any other. She is roughly handled, and very often she is beaten. Her husband requires from her absolute faithfulness to the marriage vow, without feeling himself in the least bound by it. There is in every other respect as well, a great lack of recognition of the mutual moral obligations which marriage prescribes.

The children are the one bright spot for both father and mother in the gloom, or at best the monotony and indifference of married life. What they lack in personal tenderness for each other they bestow tenfold upon their children, often, indeed, to such an extent that it is one cause of the latter's imperfect training or utter spoiling. They do what they can for their children, they take as good care of them as they are able, they share everything with them, and make them the companions of their evening or Sunday strolls. To many among them it is the highest effort and ambition, if circumstances will but half permit, to "make something" out of their children, to give them, that is, a better education and a better chance in life than they themselves have had. The manual labourer wants his son to be a skilled mechanic; the skilled mechanic desires to see his son a tradesman or petty official. The children in the families of my acquaintance were never worked beyond their strength. If they could earn something on occasion, well and good; but, so far as I could see, they were scarcely ever regularly employed and over-taxed to increase the family income. Every workman gives his child absolute freedom and immunity from labour as long as it is possible. Did one of them fall sick great was the distress, and everything possible was done to prolong life. In such cases even the strict social democrat, naturally hostile to the regular physician, and usually in the habit of prescribing for himself, gave up his hobby, yielded to his wife's entreaties, and fetched the physician, costly as he might be. Parental love can pierce even the darkness of conceit and half knowledge.

I must record here my disapprobation of the extraordinary use

of profane language. Everybody swore; the workmen in the factory, the lads at their play, the young girls in the evenings, at home or in the street. They swore in every key, on every subject; they were often quite unconscious of it. Every sensation was expressed by an oath—anger, hatred, envy, joy, vanity, boastfulness. I counted once the oaths that I chanced to overhear in a single day; the number was nearly a hundred. It is my firm belief that this habit is an outcome and a legacy of our system of military service, which shows itself in this regard as anything but an institution conducive to good morals.

To offset this, let me say that I never saw a trace of thievishness in the factory among the workmen there, though in the inns it was only too common. There it was necessary to be really very much on one's guard. A knife left lying on table or chair, a stick carelessly placed in the corner, would disappear at once and find their way to the pawnshop, the small sum raised on them being quickly invested in brandy. I do not mean to say that every *habitué* of the inns was a pilferer. But hardly any of the regular old customers scorned this easy way of getting what they wanted. Immediately upon entering an inn it was usual to give portmanteau and stick into the care of the "Hausvater," and to hand over to him at night whatever other valuables one might have. If a piece of money dropped on the floor, it was a rule that nobody should move from his place; the loser alone stooped and gathered up the missing coins unaided.

I have already spoken of the mental attitude of the workmen towards one another, and described in detail their relations during work. I must add one generalisation. In spite of all the close companionship among them, which the co-operative nature of their employment necessitated in working hours, yet in the monotonous uniformity of their daily life, the trait of solidarity, of community, of inner harmony, sank more and more into the background, and in its place the special characteristics of the individual came to the front, good and bad, and there was much wrangling over petty interests. Jealousy and envy, insolence and back-biting, gossip and toadying, selfishness and meanness, bitter-

ness and suspicion, came, as they always must, where the community of interest is only a compulsory one, to revolting expression, and gave rise, as they always must, to those dissentions, cliques and claims of precedence which often weigh so much more with the people than any common tie. I often heard the complaint, which seems trifling enough, but in which there is so much truth, that working men cannot all be brought to the same way of thinking; they agree only in public. Or, as it was expressed, "if a workman earns fifty pfennigs more than his mates he looks down on them at once and thinks wonders of himself." One man said to me, by way of doing me a good turn, "You oughtn't to tell the others so much about your past life; you only get laughed at behind your back." The same man warned me specifically once against another; "X. is an old blab." Yet the wooden walls of our privy were scribbled all over with insults to the very man who had given me this warning; "Back-biter N.," still another, a splenetic and sour old fellow, to be sure, said to me once, "There are plenty of scoundrels in this shop!" The same sort of thing went on all through the workmen's tenements, especially among the women.

Among the men there were two diametrically opposite ways of looking at work. To some it was nothing but a burden. Every now and then someone would say, "Nobody works for the pleasure of it." I overheard a discussion between two men once at breakfast, beginning over a bit of sausage which one, a machinist, picked up and wrapped carefully in a bit of paper. "I'll take this home to my dog," he said.

"What do you want with a dog?" his neighbour asked him. "It's only just so much tax to pay out."

"Oh, for fun," the other said apologetically. "Must have some fun!"

"That's more than you need," was the meaning and ironical reply. "You ought to have fun enough out of your work."

Toil and idleness were synonymous with this group—a large one—with weariness and delight, ennui and pleasant change. It seemed to them that the rich, the "great people," that had no

need to work, could never be bored. "They eat, drink, travel, read, see fine pictures and fine scenery, and have handsome wives." I tried once to protest, energetically, against this idea, and to convince the workman who was advancing it that there were serious men who, to be sure, are not always the rich, who felt that the want of regular occupation and responsibility, an aimless and purposeless existence, was the greatest bane and torment, and the hardest possible load to carry. But I came up against an absolutely blank wall of unintelligence. "Nonsense!" was the short and sharp retort with which he put an end to the argument, "a rich man can't possibly be bored." Working men have no longer the least conception of a class in society which works hard and has high ideals, yet combines its "high thinking" with "plain living," and finds true happiness in noble spiritual joys.

With this idea of labour went hand in hand, accordingly, a feeling of distrust of the upper classes and a cold aversion towards them, with a profound consciousness of the gulf between those classes and themselves, which seldom, indeed, focussed itself upon a personal object, but, perhaps, for that very reason, exerted a deeper influence upon the general feeling. It is what one of my friends wittily characterised as *objective* hatred. It is a feeling often nobly expressed, with a certain proud consciousness of measuring themselves against those more favoured by fortune. Something that happened at one of the meetings of our Campaign Club throws an interesting side-light upon the subject. The lecturer of the evening had read a long article out of some journal, not local, about a decision of the Chemnitz Committee on Country Holidays;[1] to wit, that on account of the character of the increasing agitation in the Chemnitz labour movement, the committee felt itself obliged, for the future, to deprive the children of pronounced social democrats of the benefits of the Country Holiday. Upon this a man rose to his feet and spoke with intense bitterness somewhat as follows:

"Comrades! you have just heard how a so-called charity can

[1] "Fresh Air Fund," "Country Week." This charity has so many local names that it is difficult to know how best to translate it.

be used as a political weapon. That is the way of the bourgeoisie! Let us make no reply, but let us redouble our resolve to struggle with our whole strength that our children may not have to ask for this charity again,—and then, let us not return evil for evil. Let us promise each other here to-day that it shall be our motto now and always—When a working man sees a rich man's child in danger or distress he risks his life to save it."

The other conception of work is a higher one, but even more portentous for the future task of our pastors. The men who held it were not of the opinion that all toil is a curse to mankind, but they respected only that toil which brings a direct material return. From their point of view the physical work of the manual labourer and the factory hand is exactly on a par with mental work like that of the tradesman or the mechanician which is instantly repaid with money. Of the work of the scientist or the philosopher, undertaken for its own sake or the sake of higher interests, they had little or no comprehension. This was the course of their misconception of what they called the useless and childish work of the clergy; above all, this was the cause of their inability to receive the spiritual and moral proofs of Christianity even when they were not disinclined to accept them.

This characteristic materialism is the sign-manual of the whole moral development of my fellow-workmen at the present time. Together with many baser traits they have many good and amiable ones, and it is my deep conviction that, morally, they do not stand on a lower plane than the other classes of our people. But their good qualities are growing visibly less and less ethical and religious, and more and more economic, while they more and more confine the manifestation of their qualities to their own class The ideals which they set before themselves are ideals of utility, not of good. It follows logically that a moral character shaped by such forces is steadily capable of less resistance, and must plainly lose those virtues which have hitherto been its stay and its excellence. I believe, after what I have tried to show, that it is no injustice or lack of discrimination to ascribe this lamentable evolution not alone to economic conditions, but largely to social-

democratic agitation. I saw everywhere plain evidence that this is the second point where social-democracy has exercised a fatal power and won a fatal success, and now threatens the future with its greatest danger. And after all that I have seen I cannot hope that in this respect a better day is to dawn for us in the immediate future.

CHAPTER VIII.

RESULTS AND DEMANDS.

It remains to recapitulate the results of my investigations.

One thing, I believe, has been proved clearly, namely:—The "labour question" is not merely a stomach or wage question, but an educational and religious question of the first importance, which would exist—although possibly under other forms—even if the vast majority of the labouring class were to have the best of wages and subsistence. The wage problem, to the best of my observation, is but one factor in the movement; perhaps the most tangible, but not the most important or the determinative one. It is natural that agitation should begin its attack among working men upon the side of material needs and grievances, and that it should attempt to create such where none exist; but that which, for a score of years past, has impelled the great mass to take part in these struggles, and has brought to the front of the movement the most fortunate, the most intelligent among them, is not, I repeat, the wage question alone. It is, first of all, an ardent longing on the part of the whole class of factory labour for more respect and recognition, for greater actual and social equality in distinction to the formal and political equality which is already theirs; it is their belief in the possibility of a better system of industrial production, and their vague foreboding that the Fourth Estate, now first awakening to a sense of its own independence, has for its earliest task to inaugurate this better system by bringing to bear upon Parliament the democratic pressure of the masses already entitled to representation. It is their deep desire

to be no longer in this coming industrial order merely the dumb and passive instruments of a superior will; no longer obedient machines, but men, strongly and independently co-operating; not hands alone, but heads. It is the irresistible impulse to a larger intellectual freedom, the craving for the benefits of knowledge and education, and for a fuller understanding of those high and lofty problems of the human soul which, despite the universal pursuit of wealth and externals, rise up before humanity to-day, new riddles in new forms. All this, rough, discordant, full of anomalies and extravagances, yet plainly visible to the observant eye, stamps the beginning of the labour movement in Germany. It is what distinguishes the movement here from that in all other countries, even the Chartist movement of the forties in England. There, to be sure, were the same wretched material conditions which we discern everywhere to-day, the terrible economic distress which found its expression in that movement; there, too, the first demand was for food, clothing, a better wage—for a lot, in short worthy to be called human; but the other features were there of secondary consideration. With us, as I have pointed out, the case is reversed, and it is this fact which makes the German labour movement so terribly serious and complex, but it is this fact also which gives assurance that, if the course of this movement can be turned into peaceful channels, it will bring about results even more lasting and more serviceable to posterity than the trade union organisation of the English labouring class.

Another fact which should be frankly admitted is that social democracy is the mouth-piece and the representative of the labour movement in Germany. These two are so closely identified at present that it may be said social democracy *is* the labour movement. It is a delusion, to which many people are still subject, to believe that social democracy can in some way be supplanted or uprooted. This was the mistake of the framers of the socialist legislation and the founders of Christian socialism, all of whom based their tactics upon the personal qualities of the social-democratic leaders, ignoring the hundreds of thousands who stand behind these leaders, but without resembling them. In both

instances the mistake has been proved. German social democracy can no more be set aside to-day than can the whole labour movement. On the contrary, it is my well-considered judgment that it will extend itself in the future, and will overrun many of the agricultural districts. It is certain that where great landed interests are numerous, and are combined with capitalistic forms of production, like sugar refineries and distilleries, a class of labour exactly similar to the urban one has already been formed. No liberal trade unions, no young men's Christian associations, no evangelical working men's unions, can stem this process of evolution, which has become, it seems to me, a historical necessity. I do not deny that the above-named organisations have a work, and an important one, particularly the working men's unions, which afford a refuge for thousands of labourers, far above whose heads the waves of social tumult are rolling, peaceable souls averse to strife, who do not want to exchange the Christian faith, handed down to them from their fathers, for any restless search and groping after new things. But the unions have no further mission than this; and, painful as it is to say so, yet I must explicitly declare that it would be a fallacy to see in them the powerful springs of new and victorious counter-organisations against social democracy. To believe this would be to make once more the mistake of supposing that social democracy can be dismissed from the scheme of things. As I have said, it is impossible; it is not even desirable. But to direct social democracy, to elevate it, to regenerate it, is possible, desirable, and needful.

To do this there must be first a deep and far-reaching work of reform, with unconditional concession of all the just demands of labour, its organisation in a class by itself, and the incorporation of that class in the constitution of the modern state. But this is the task of the Government and the representative assembly of Parliament. Here, as a student of theology, I have no opinion and no suggestion to offer. Only I would entreat that my experience be borne in mind: that everything which is done for the working class to-day must be done through them, with their co-

operation and goodwill. Patriarchal methods belong to the past; every unit of the great whole of labour is awake to a sense of his own independent existence, and desires to co-operate with his fellows, in thought and act, wherever his own welfare is concerned. And only by giving it a sincere and permanent share in the socia reconstruction of the future will labour be brought to a reasonable, useful, and practical efficiency.

But the other no less honourable part of the task of education belongs to the Church. Here we are confronted with what I have called the third general result of my studies; the fact, namely, that German social democracy is to-day not merely a political party, not merely the promoter of a new system of economics, or even both of these combined and nothing more; it is also the embodiment of a philosophy, a logical, anti-Christian, materialistic conception of the universe. Upon this materialistic principle it founds its economic and political system; this principle, the caricature of a so-called science worshipped by its followers, is the corner-stone of the party, gives it authority and ideals, and exercises the most fatal and lasting influence, not so much on the social and political tendencies, as on the intellectual and ethical character of the whole German labouring class. The work of the Church is thus plainly indicated. Its sole task is to expose the materialism of social democracy with its anti-Christian conception of life. The political aims, the social schemes and aspirations of that party, need give the Church no more concern than it feels for the preservation of existing social conditions, or the continuance of the present form of government. These latter have their own appointed guardians who may and must protect them. But the Church has no interest in the task; it could even look tranquilly on at their destruction, if they were proved powerless and unprofitable in spiritual conflict. To the Church, and the servants of the Church, it is a matter of indifference whether they work within a "feudal," a "Manchester," or a "social," state; the Church exists not for any form of government, but for mankind. Suppose in some future, near or remote, we should see the rise of the most radically socialistic state, suppose the mobilisation of all

citizens in working men's battalions should actually come to pass —what then? We evangelical "parsons" should take our places in the ranks; we, too, should work our four or six hours in the mills, the mines, the farms, and for the other hours of the day we should be ready, like the Apostles, freely and fearlessly to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord to all who would listen. But we need not look so far before us. The goal of our desires is a nearer one; it is to prevent social democracy from becoming the complete anti-Christ. We have to see to it that our axiom becomes fact; that even a social democrat may be a Christian, and a Christian may be a social democrat.

But to do this we must shatter the materialistic foundation on which social democracy has built up its conception of the universe. We must discredit the authority of that false science whose glitter dazzles the sight of the workmen honestly contending in its cause, and whose sophistries fetter his mental powers. We must unmask the hypocrisy of the pseudo-science of social-democratic popular literature; we must oppose the true to the false, the impartial to the partisan, the chaste to the impure. This is the social mission of the men of true culture in our day, the men of the school and the study; they must descend from their professorial chairs among the crowd of the common people, and share with them the treasures of their knowledge and their thought, holding nothing back. A new and vast order is mightily making its way upward out of social uncertainty and moral confusion. Let us go to meet it; let us give it light, the full light, the full truth which it demands, let us suffer no longer that it shall be fed with poisoned knowledge, let us give it all, all of our best and holiest thought. Let us go into the trade unions of the workmen, into their campaign clubs, wherever they may assemble, let us put ourselves at their service heartily, sincerely, without *arrière-pensée*, without partisan intentions, without selfish interests, and with but one desire, to open wide the treasures of true science for them, to help them read past and future by its chart, to show them earnestly and carefully the bounds that are set to our knowledge, to warn them against abuse and error. We

Protestant theologians do not fear this task, rather we rejoice in it, we invite it, for we know that genuine and honest researches of science never dim the truth of our faith, but make it more glorious. Veil upon veil is still drawn before our mortal eyes; welcome to him who shall help us to lift one of them, for so the eternal, invincible majesty of our faith will but be more and more clearly revealed to us, bringing peace to weary men; and so, the Evangelical Church will best perform its present highest duty to society, in offering a modern Christianity to the modern working man.

After all my studies no shadow of doubt remains to me that the working man—at least, the working man of Saxony—situated as he is, in consequence of social-democratic agitation, with modern modes of thought and modern ideas of science, is no more to be circumscribed by the mental conceptions of the past in his feelings, thoughts, conclusions, than the educated man of the world; nor can he be thrust, contented, back into the neo-Platonism of the first centuries after Christ, or the beginning of our own inherited creed. The modern "enlightened" labouring class is in a position exactly similar to that of the middle class, among whom the Egidy movement produced such profound, though, alas! such transitory excitement; they long, like all deep feeling men, for true peace, but they can no longer find it in Christianity, because its eternal and unchangeable truths are held out to them to-day in a form which they cannot accept. And as the labouring classes, like the mercantile or official circles of the bourgeoisie, have neither time nor training nor intellectual discrimination to break this form and get at the contents for themselves, and as they also are overcome by the whirl of pleasure and the glamour of the immediate present, they throw away the whole precious treasure, and lose the essence with the mould in which it has been inclosed. It is for us, the Church's servants, to gather up the precious things which have been thrown away; it is for us to do what our brothers no longer can, perhaps no longer will; to break the old forms and offer to those who, in spite of everything, still long for it, the whole glory and truth of

our faith, but in new ideas and images, in new terms such as alone can appeal to the men of to-day. In this work we may call upon all the apparatus of genuine science to give us aid; but we do not need to conceal or set aside a single manifestation of the power and the Being whose workings we perceive in Christianity. Form is transitory; substance is eternal. But this is not the task of these pages, nor indeed can any one accomplish, single-handed, what has occupied so many lofty intellects for so long a time. Only by a common effort, gradually, little by little, with humility, earnestness and prudence, but with courage and energy also, can we, the appointed and the future ministers of the Church, accomplish it, bringing it into ever closer relation with the historical person, Jesus of Nazareth, before whose calm majesty alone the working man to-day bows down. But accomplished it must be, for otherwise bitter experience has convinced me Christianity will become extinct not only in the working classes but in others as well. Considered from the standpoint of religion and the Church, social democracy is the first great intellectual movement since the time of the Reformation. It, too, puts to every man, no matter how humble, the question which he must answer for himself, whether he is to be for or against Christ, and it subjects the inmost nature of each individual, all his spiritual and mental powers, to the strain of that decision. Let us lay hold of this wonderful historical opportunity; let us see to it that the answer shall be, "Lord! I believe!" If we do this, the social-democratic movement may be deplored as a terrible crisis, but it must also be recognised as an infinite blessing, and the means of another great step in advance for religion and the Church. Those whom we do not win over to our side, we shall at least hold in check by the force of scientific ascendancy, ours once more, and this service, too, is needed.

But the future victory of our faith, its re-conquest of our working classes, is not to be won by this work of scientific defence, this wedding of old truths to new formulas alone; it depends quite as much on the subduing power of devout lives to furnish that further proof of Christianity which our working men demand

before they are willing to believe. But Christian characters can only grow in small parishes which are themselves instinct with life. To create such organisations is a social necessity to-day. Because none such had existed for years in the suburb where I lived as a workman (and is only just now showing faint signs of returning vitality), because my mates had lived there forsaken, as it were, in the bosom of a dead Church, because they had found in such a Church no moral safeguard or support, above all because they had learned not to look to the Church for any help, they were even more powerless to withstand the assaults of their antagonists than if these conditions had not taught them to lose all faith in any practical bearing of Christianity on their desolate lives. But I need not enlarge upon this idea of Church organisations which occupies all men's minds to-day, and is everywhere in process of realisation. What happiness, if thirty or forty years from now every large city should have its small parishes of from five thousand to eight thousand people; if pastoral care and preaching were to reach every household; if the work were furthered by enthusiastic laymen from every class, but all inspired by the same high devotion; if the poor, the sick, the helpless in each parish were reached by good works of mercy and charity! This is no Utopia like Bebel's "State of the Future," nobly as he has dreamed it; this is only a question of organisation, the first steps to which are already taken, and which will gradually be accomplished. And when the persecuted, the timid, the indifferent and the scoffers look in amazement at our work, and ask, "In what power do ye these things?" we shall answer as the early Christians did, "In the power of Jesus of Nazareth," and we shall overcome the heathen of these latter days.

One thing, however, even these parishes of the future cannot accomplish; they cannot do away with the distress which has its root in the great industrial organism, diseased as it now is. The benevolent agencies, incorporated with every such parish, can only bind up the wounds and soothe the pains that are the outward and visible signs of mortal sickness in the body politic; the sickness they cannot heal. This work is to be done in the

interests of the Church, by the newly-formed Evangelical Social Congress.[1] I do not mean to speak here of this work in my official capacity of general secretary, only to express my opinion as to its most promising outlook. I believe the Evangelical Social Congress has a two-fold mission. Its weapon is the Gospel's code of morals, and by this it must test the conditions of the time, candidly and fairly, without regard to parties or persons. It must see to it that moral principles are not again disregarded in the new social formations, nor again subordinated to mere material interests. By the pressure of public opinion, if not otherwise, it must force the cultivated upper class, as well as the *entrepreneur*, to look, in future, upon collective industry as existing for the sake of the men who are dependent upon it, and above all, the working men; it must take care that industrial establishments gradually become places where all employed in them may find not only a sufficient subsistence but inward satisfaction as well, and an occupation with a moral purpose and an aim. Thus the Evangelical Social Congress will become a social-ethical court of appeal, whose weight the State and its legislative bodies will have to regard in future, as they have to regard, for example, the Central Union of German Manufacturers, or the social-democratic party in the Reichstag. But the Congress, while it is fulfilling the duties I have just enumerated, has, I believe, another task before it; it has to point out to the Church, its organs and its servants, the real source of material distress, namely, our economic conditions; it has to open their eyes to our economic problems, and to make them feel that these problems will have to be taken into consideration in all future action of the Church of whatever kind. Above all, the individual clergyman should learn from the yearly Congress to look at his parish and his parishioners from an economic standpoint; to study their needs, and to perceive the effects of economic conditions upon the moral and religious characters of his charge; to discuss these things with prominent members in his pastoral intercourse, to direct their attention to social conditions, and to awaken in them a consciousness of re-

[1] A society somewhat like the Christian Social Union of England.

sponsibility, so that their public as well as their private life may give evidence of earnest social feeling. If the Evangelical Social Congress performs this double task it will fulfil a noble mission, and will be a mighty means of finally attaining the object which the Evangelical Church has set before itself; namely, the education, the elevation, the Christianisation of the unguided and pagan social democracy of to-day, and the overthrow of its atheistic and materialistic speculations.

L.

THE END.

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